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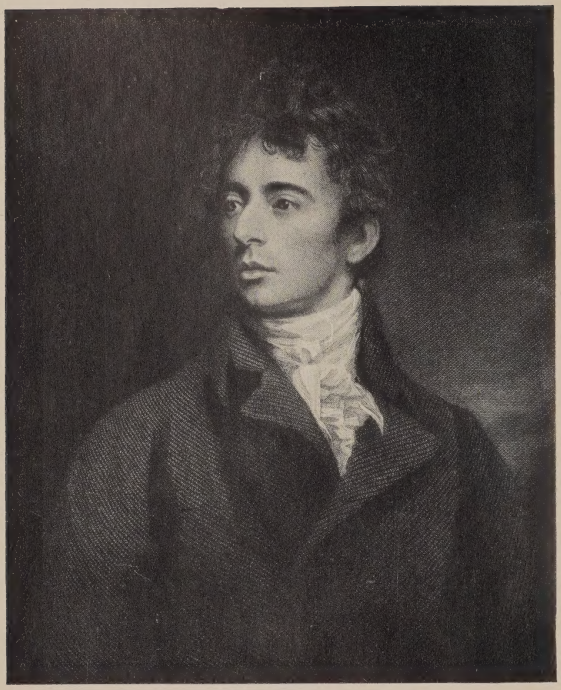

ROBERT SOUTHEY

From the painting by John Opie

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OXFORD EDITION

Poems of ROBERT SOUTHEY

CONTAINING

THALABA, THE CURSE OF KEHAMA
RODERICK, MADOC, A TALE OF PARAGUAY
AND SELECTED MINOR POEMS

EDITED BY

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EDITOR'S PREFACE

'FEW people,' it has been said, 'have written so much and so well as Southey, and have been so little read.' The remark refers to his work as a whole—in prose as well as in verse—but it is singularly applicable to his poetry. As a poet Southey is now scarcely known, save as the author of the lines beginning: 'My days among the Dead are past,' and of a few ballads such as *The Battle of Blenheim* and *The Inchcape Rock*, which are learnt by children in the nursery. The general estimation in which he is held may be illustrated by the *obiter dictum* in a recent review, that 'it is impossible to take Southey as a poet seriously'; and he is usually condemned as unreadable without a trial. But it is surely impossible to accept so summary a verdict—a verdict, be it remarked, which is in direct contradiction to that pronounced upon Southey's poetry by the most competent judges of his own day. No one, indeed, would pretend that Southey was one of the greatest of English poets. His position in our poetical hierarchy is far more modest. But a man may attain to an honourable place on the roll of Parnassus, although he fall considerably short of the highest rank, and in his lifetime Southey had no cause to fear the judgement of his peers. The praise bestowed upon his poetry by S. T. Coleridge, and by W. S. Landor, might perhaps be discounted on the ground that each of these two critics was influenced by close personal friendship for its author. But we may cite the opinions of other men free from any suspicion of such bias and equally well qualified to speak. In 1813 Sir Walter Scott declined the laureateship which had been offered him, (though without the Regent's knowledge or approval), by Lord Liverpool; and in declining he suggested to Croker that the post should be offered to Southey. On September 4 of that year he writes to Southey to explain what he has done, and to make it clear, as he expresses it, that he has not himself refused the laurel 'from any foolish prejudice against the situation: otherwise, how durst I mention it to you, my elder brother in the muse?—but from a sort of internal hope that they would give it to you, upon whom it would be so much

more worthily conferred. For I am not such an ass as not to know that you are my better in poetry, though I have had, probably but for a time, the tide of popularity in my favour' (Lockhart's *Life of Scott*, chap. xxvi). Now, no doubt in this letter Scott was anxious to say pleasant things in a pleasant manner. But he was no humbug. He would never have gone out of his way to coin a false and empty compliment, and he could not have written as he did, unless he had felt a sincere admiration for Southey's poetical powers. Byron, again, whose principles were as opposed to those of Southey in poetry as they were in politics, morality, and religion, was yet constrained to admit the Laureate's claims to admiration as a poet. 'Of his poetry,' he wrote in his journal for November 22, 1813, 'there are various opinions: there is, perhaps, too much of it for the present generation; —posterity will probably select. He has *passages* equal to anything' (Moore's *Life of Byron*, chap. xviii). And at a later date he spoke of *Roderick* as 'the first poem of the time'. To this testimony we may add the witness of another political adversary of Southey, in the person of Macaulay. The young champion of the *Edinburgh Review* was not the man to deal tenderly with the leading writer of the opposing party. He must have felt towards Southey something of that desire to 'dust the varlet's jacket for him in the next number of the Blue and Yellow', which, a year later, animated his notorious attack upon John Wilson Croker. And in his review of Southey's *Colloquies on the Progress and Prospects of Society* he criticizes his opponent's writings both in prose and verse with unsparing severity. Yet in the midst of his censure he makes the following remarkable admission: 'His poems, taken in the mass, stand far higher than his prose works. His official Odes, indeed, among which the *Vision of Judgement* must be classed, are, for the most part, worse than Pye's and as bad as Cibber's; nor do we think him generally happy in short pieces. But his longer poems, though full of faults, are nevertheless very extraordinary productions. We doubt greatly whether they will be read fifty years hence; but that, if they are read, they will be admired, we have no doubt whatever.' And, to come down to more recent times, we may cite in conclusion the favourable judgements pronounced upon Southey as a poet by men so eminent and so different from one another, as Cardinal Newman and Thomas Carlyle. The influence exercised upon the former by *Thalaba* is well known. '*Thalaba*', he wrote in 1850, 'has ever been to my feelings the most sublime of English poems—(I don't know Spenser)—I mean morally sublime. The versification of *Thalaba* is most melodious too—many persons will not perceive they are reading blank verse.' (Quoted in *Lord Acton and his Circle*, ed. Abbot Gasquet, O.S.B., p. xix.) Carlyle, though far from being unqualified in

his praise, tells us in his *Reminiscences* how his early prejudice against Southey, derived from the *Edinburgh Review*, was overcome by the reading of his chief poems. 'It must have been a year or two later,' he says, 'when his *Thalaba*, *Curse of Kehama*, *Joan of Arc*, &c., came into my hands, or some one of them came, which awakened new effort for the others. I recollect the much kindlier and more respectful feeling these awoke in me, which has continued ever since. I much recognize the piety, the gentle deep affection, the reverence for God and man, which reigned in these pieces: full of soft pity, like the wailings of a mother, and yet with a clang of chivalrous valour finely audible too.' (T. Carlyle's *Reminiscences*, vol. ii, Appendix, p. 311 [1881].)

Each of us ought doubtless to form his own opinions on literary questions, as on others, without a slavish deference to authority, however great. But the criticisms quoted above from men so well qualified to judge may at least give us pause before we decide to condemn Southey to oblivion as no better than a laborious poetaster.

Meanwhile there can be little doubt that it is more difficult for us than it was for his contemporaries adequately to appreciate such a writer as Southey. We are under the influence of greater and very different minds. We shall not find in Southey the creative imagination, the philosophic insight, of Browning or of Tennyson. We shall miss in him the dramatic power of the one, and the mastery of diction, the *curiosa felicitas*, of the other. Southey plumbs no depths of thought. He soars to no heights of lyric rapture. The sensuous element is almost wholly absent from his writings. It is not his to stir the deepest feelings of our nature; and many of his poems may justly be charged with a lack of human interest. Again, his imagination is not always completely master of the materials with which it works. He can construct rather than create. His exuberant fancy leads him at times unconsciously to cross the borderland which separates what is strange and striking from what is merely strange and grotesque. His diction is wanting in those 'inevitable' touches which mark the work of all really great poets. His style is apt to be diffuse; and he has a tendency to preach too obviously. But, when full allowance has been made for all defects, there remains in Southey's poetry much that is wholly admirable. He may utter no very profound message to the world; he may not see very far into the mystery of human life. But he has seen enough to inspire him to high and unfaltering action. The spirit of Christian Stoicism which animated his whole life breathes through all his writings. In them Southey has given noble expression to the power of the human will, based on religious faith, to resist evil and to rise superior to all untoward circumstance. His

poetry, as all else that he wrote, reveals a firm trust in the ultimate triumph of good, a cheerful courage to endure suffering, a passion to resist all tyranny and oppression, an unshakable resolve to cleave to all that is fair and pure and true. Such a spirit is far removed from certain tendencies of modern thought. But, while it is content to leave much unexplained, it will seem to many to have laid hold upon the larger portion of the truth.

But other qualifications go to make a poet besides nobility of thought and aim ; and in such qualifications Southey is not wanting. He commands a flexible and ample diction, a style which can rise and fall in accordance with its subject. His imagination is rich and powerful, if at times somewhat undisciplined. Many of his characters are finely conceived and clearly presented to the reader's mind. This is more especially true of *Roderick.* Indeed, there are few scenes in English poetry of a more intense dramatic feeling than that in which Florinda confesses to the guilty king, changed beyond recognition in his hermit's garb, the story of their common fall. Add to this that Southey is a master of spirited narrative ; that his hoards of curious learning furnish him with a wealth of exotic and picturesque ornament and illustration ; that he possesses great metrical dexterity, and a vein of real, if somewhat simple, humour ; and it will easily be understood that he commands a great variety of range. Nor, in trying to form a just estimate of Southey's poetry, must we forget to take into consideration his historical importance as a factor in the development of our literature. This is perhaps generally underrated. Southey did far more than is usually recognized in breaking the fetters which had been riveted upon our poetry by the genius and authority of Pope. Cowper, Crabbe, and, still more, Burns, had already begun to teach men to admire what is simple and natural instead of worshipping exclusively a glittering and artificial perfection of form ; but Southey was almost the first to strike out an entirely new line. *Joan of Arc* is not a good poem, but it heralded the dawn of the romantic school. *Thalaba* was published four years before *The Lay of the Last Minstrel.* At that time Southey's verse was far more widely read than that of Wordsworth or Coleridge, and he did much to make smooth the way for greater poets than himself. His English Eclogues, again, and his Monodramas—crude and uninspired as in themselves they are—furnished the rough models for some of the most striking work of Browning and of Tennyson. And in some of his Ballads his humorous treatment of mediaeval fables and his mastery of rhyme and metre are a distinct anticipation of the *Ingoldsby Legends.* It would be most misleading to judge of Southey's historical importance as a poet by looking solely at his reputation to-day.

One further caution must be added. All poets—even the greatest—have written a quantity of verse that is comparatively worthless. Southey himself frankly admitted that many of his shorter pieces were fit for little but the flames. But he could at least plead in excuse that he had written them under pressure of sheer necessity, in order to earn money wherewith to maintain his own family and others dependent upon his generosity. For several years he wrote verses for the *Morning Post* at a guinea a week; and these and other like pieces of task-work could not be expected to reach a very high level of merit. The necessity for doing such task-work to some extent spoilt Southey as a poet. But those who have learnt to know and to love him can hardly wish that it had been otherwise. For the noble self-denial, the ceaseless industry, the unfailing cheerfulness with which he bore this burden, are among the most attractive features in his character. If Southey missed greatness as a poet, he attained it as a man: and to know him as a man is to gain immensely in appreciation of his poetry, for his character is stamped upon everything that he wrote. In this connexion let us listen to the witness of Sir Henry Taylor, himself a poet and a man of a keen critical faculty. He had been the intimate friend of Southey's later years and had known him as he was; and this is how he writes of him:—

'If he expected for himself a larger measure of attention from posterity than may now seem likely to be accorded him, it should be remembered that, though as long as his mind lasted he "lived laborious days" for the sake of his family and of others whom, in the generosity of his heart, he helped to support, yet all the labours of all the days did not enable him to do more than make preparations for the three great works which it was the object and ambition of his life to accomplish.

'Of what he did accomplish a portion will not soon be forgotten. There were greater poets in his generation, and there were men of a deeper and more far-reaching philosophic faculty; but take him for all in all—his ardent and genial piety, his moral strength, the magnitude and variety of his powers, the field which he covered in literature, and the beauty of his life—it may be said of him, justly and with no straining of the truth, that of all his contemporaries he was the greatest MAN.' (*The English Poets*, ed. T. H. Ward, iv, p. 164.)

It does not fall within the scope of this series to give critical estimates of the authors whose works are published in it. But it seemed worth while to say so much in order to justify the inclusion of Southey among the 'Oxford Poets'. The nature of the present volume may now be briefly explained.

In 1837–8 Southey published his collected Poetical Works in ten volumes. That edition included a few pieces not previously printed, and all those poems already published which Southey thought, for any reason, worthy of preservation. It was originally intended to reprint in the present volume all the poems published in 1837–8 together with the following additions :—

1. '*Oliver Newman: a New-England Tale* (unfinished): With Other Poetical Remains.' A volume under this title was published in 1845, after Southey's death, by Herbert Hill, his cousin and son-in-law; and the poems contained in it were subsequently included in a one-volume reprint of the collected edition of 1837–8.

2. *Robin Hood*, Part I; *The Three Spaniards*; and *March*; all of which appeared in 1847 in a small volume published by Mrs. Southey, entitled '*Robin Hood*: . . . A Fragment. By the late Robert Southey and Caroline Southey. With Other Fragments and Poems by R.S. and C.S.'

3. The *Inscription for a Coffee-Pot* and the *Lines to Charles Lamb* (see pp. 378 and 402).

It was discovered, however, that such an edition would demand a volume of no less than 1,100 pages. It therefore became clear that some system of selection must be adopted. The loss involved in this change of plan was the less important since, as has been noticed above, Southey was impelled by the stern necessity of winning his daily bread to write for the newspapers great quantities of verse admittedly of very little merit. Such productions of uninspired drudgery may safely be disregarded in forming an estimate of a poet's true worth. Again, while in the case of a Shakespeare or a Milton there may be some justification for gathering together every line of verse that the author ever wrote, the same argument does not apply to the works of lesser men. The office of a literary Resurrection Man has little to recommend it. And a poet may fairly claim that the reputation due to the best that he has given us should not be buried beneath a mass of writings which he would himself wish forgotten. Further, it should be remembered in the present instance that Southey himself set the example of making a selection from his own poems: for there were many of his early pieces which he deliberately did not republish in 1837–8.

The necessity of selection once admitted, it was clear that the only rational principle on which that selection could be based was the literary merit of each particular poem. Upon that principle I have tried to act in preparing the present volume. I have, indeed, retained a few pieces which have no great claim to survival except as they serve to illustrate Southey's own personality or the development of his art. And no poem here printed appears in a mutilated form. But I believe that I have omitted nothing of

permanent value as literature. Indeed, I doubt whether Southey himself would have fought very strenuously for the retention of any of the poems excluded, apart from the *Vision of Judgement*. In that particular instance, it must be admitted, we should probably have failed to convince him: and we should have been reduced to retort upon him his own reply to certain critics of the *Vision*, that 'de gustibus non est disputandum'. A word, however, should perhaps be said as to the omission of *Joan of Arc*. On grounds of historical interest I wish it had been possible to retain the poem by which Southey first made his name. But considerations of space demanded its sacrifice, and no serious plea could be advanced in support of its literary excellence. Even the historical interest of *Joan of Arc*, as it appeared in 1837, is comparatively small. The poem was practically re-written no less than three times after its first publication, and in its final form it presents but a pale reflexion of the sentimental ardours which mark the original version of 1796. Of Southey's longer poems, as it is the earliest, so it is from a literary standpoint the least worthy of preservation. And it may therefore be the more readily omitted from an edition intended for lovers of poetry in general rather than for the professional student. Two pieces only will be found in the present volume which have not previously appeared in any collected edition of Southey's Poems—the *Lines to Charles Lamb* and the *Inscription for a Coffee-Pot*. The reasons for reprinting these verses are given in the Notes.

For the convenience of any students of our literature who may wish to gain an acquaintance with the whole extent of Southey's verse I have added in the Appendix the chief sources in which poems not reprinted in this volume may be found. But, as stated above, none of those pieces can be regarded as making any serious contribution towards Southey's poetical reputation.

The poems have been arranged in the present edition upon the following plan. In the first 378 pages will be found grouped together *Thalaba*, *The Curse of Kehama*, and *Roderick*, the three finest of Southey's long poems, and also a small selection of the best of his minor pieces. It is hoped that this arrangement may be a help to the reader, who will find most of Southey's best work brought together in a convenient form, instead of having to hunt it out for himself from the entire mass of the poetry. It was inevitable that such a selection should produce a certain effect of incongruity; and this is more especially the case, since one or two lighter pieces have been included in it, rather as being characteristic of the writer than as making any claim to poetical merit. But the end may in this case justify the means; and the very variety of style and subject serves to illustrate the extent

of Southey's range. After the Selected Minor Poems the arrangement is that adopted by Southey in 1837–8—with the addition, as mentioned above, of the *Lines to Charles Lamb*.

The editor of Southey's poems finds himself free from one great difficulty common to editors: he is called upon to decide no question of variant readings. The text of the poems as revised by Southey himself in 1837–8 is clearly final. In reprinting that text I have made no change, apart from the correction of one or two plain misprints, and of certain obvious inadvertencies in punctuation. I have not thought it worth while to alter a few archaisms of spelling. Such forms as 'chuse', 'controul', or 'gulph', can confuse no one; and, as Southey preferred to use these forms, there seems no good reason why we should revise them for him.

It may here be noted in passing that, while Southey spared no pains in correcting his earlier poems, when once he had mastered his craft, he wrote little which he afterwards saw cause to alter. Thus *Joan of Arc* was practically rewritten at least three times; the second edition of *Thalaba* is an immense improvement on the first, and is in its turn far inferior in symmetry and polish to the final version of the poem as it appeared in 1838; and many of the early minor pieces were recast after their first publication in almost every line. On the other hand, the variations between the first and later editions of *Madoc* are comparatively few and unimportant, and the latest text of *The Curse of Kehama* and of *Roderick* differs scarcely at all from that originally published. In such cases as *Joan of Arc* and *Thalaba* it is not without interest to trace the alterations introduced by Southey into successive editions of the poems; but to have cumbered the present volume with an Apparatus Criticus would have been only to annoy the general reader in order to gratify the literary pedant. I have, however, reprinted Southey's Prefaces to the first nine volumes of the ten-volume edition of 1837–8, both on account of the light which they throw upon the composition of many of the poems and for their great personal interest. But the Preface to the tenth volume has been omitted, as it is wholly concerned with a discussion of criticisms directed against the *Vision of Judgement*—a poem which is not included in the present edition.

Southey usually printed at the beginning of his shorter pieces full quotations from the sources whence the subjects of the different poems had been drawn. In a few instances I have preserved these quotations *in extenso*, but for the most part, in order to save space, I have contented myself with giving the reference. I have been able in many cases to give the date and place of the first publication of particular poems, but I have

not attempted to do so in all. Probably it would not be possible to attain completeness in this respect; nor would any important object be served by doing so. But I have endeavoured to trace the first publication of all the more notable of the shorter pieces; and I regret that in one or two such instances my search has not met with success. For all those notes which are enclosed in square brackets at the beginning of particular poems I am responsible. The date appended at the foot of any poem is that of its original composition, as printed by Southey in 1837–8.

Southey published with his poems an immense mass of illustrative notes, consisting for the most part of extracts from different authors collected in the course of his wide and varied reading. These notes are full of curious information, but are not always particularly relevant to the poems to which they are attached. From considerations of space they have been almost entirely omitted in the present edition. Some of them, however, will be found quoted—in whole or in part—in the Notes at the end of this volume; the substance of a few others is given in an abridged paraphrase. The letter (S.) after any Note shows that either its actual words or its substance may be found in Southey's note on the passage in question; and in the case of actual quotation the words quoted are marked by inverted commas.

For those Notes which are not followed by the letter (S.) I am responsible. As has been explained above, no textual questions can arise in connexion with Southey's poetry. I have therefore confined myself to inserting a few Notes in order to explain various allusions, to give information as to the composition and publication of certain poems, or to add a touch of personal or critical interest connected with them. In so doing I can hardly hope to escape the charge of having on occasion either inserted or omitted too much. But I trust that, in spite of mistakes, my object has been in great measure attained.

The Chronological Table of Southey's life on pp. xxi–xxviii may perhaps be found useful. In preparing it I have been much indebted to a similar Table in Mr. T. Hutchinson's edition of Wordsworth in the present series.

Of the imperfections of this edition of Southey's Poems I am very sensible. They may be explained in part by the fact that I have been obliged to prepare it at a distance from libraries and in the occasional intervals of other and very different work. Under these circumstances I am the more grateful to those friends without whose help my task could hardly have been completed. In particular my thanks are due to the Reverend Canon Rawnsley for kindly allowing me to see his Southey MSS.; to Miss Geraldine Fitz-Gerald for the work that she has done on my behalf at the British Museum,

and also for her help in reading through some of the proofs; and to Mr. E. H. Coleridge for his great kindness in answering my requests for information on various points and in making many useful suggestions. But above all I desire to express my gratitude to Professor Dowden. In preparing this edition I have received from him most generous help in counsel and encouragement. But I owe him a debt of far longer standing; for it was he who, by his delightful volume in the 'English Men of Letters' series, first taught me to know and to love Robert Southey.

M. H. F. G.

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LIST OF AUTHORITIES

THE list of books given below makes no pretence to being a complete bibliography. It is intended to refer the reader to (*a*) the principal authorities for Southey's life: and (*b*) a few books and essays which are of special interest from their bearing upon Southey's character and writings.

(*a*) AUTHORITIES

1. *The Life and Correspondence of Robert Southey.* Edited by his son, the Rev. C. C. Southey, 6 vols., 1849–50.

2. *Selections from the Letters of Robert Southey.* Edited by J. W. Warter, 4 vols., 1856.

3. *The Correspondence of Robert Southey with Caroline Bowles.* Edited by E. Dowden, 1881.

4. *Letters from the Lake Poets*—Samuel Taylor Coleridge, William Wordsworth, Robert Southey—to Daniel Stuart, editor of *The Morning Post* and *The Courier*, 1800–38. Printed for private circulation, 1889.

5. *The Letters of Samuel Taylor Coleridge.* Edited by E. H. Coleridge, 2 vols., 1895.

6. *Reminiscences of S. T. Coleridge and R. Southey.* By Joseph Cottle, 1847. [A recast of Cottle's *Early Recollections* (1837) with additions.]

7. *The Life and Writings of William Taylor of Norwich.* By J. W. Robberds, 2 vols., 1843.

8. *The Life of W. S. Landor.* By John Forster, 2 vols., 1869 (reprinted in vol. i of Landor's *Works and Life*, 1876).

9. *The Works of Charles and Mary Lamb.* Edited by E. V. Lucas, 1903–5, vols. vi and vii, (containing C. Lamb's Correspondence).

(*b*) MISCELLANEOUS

1. *Southey.* By E. Dowden ('English Men of Letters' series), 1879.

2. *The Literary Associations of the English Lakes.* By the Rev. Canon H. D. Rawnsley, vol. i, 1894.

3. De Quincey's *Recollections of the Lake Poets*, and *Autobiography.*

4. Hazlitt's *Spirit of the Age.*

5. *The Diary, Reminiscences, and Correspondence of H. Crabb Robinson.* Edited by T. Sadler, 3 vols., 1869.

6. T. Carlyle's *Reminiscences*, vol. ii, Appendix, pp. 309–29, 1881.

7. *Robert Southey:* an essay by Sir Henry Taylor in *The English Poets* (ed. T. H. Ward), vol. iv, pp. 155–64, 1880.

8. *Poems by Robert Southey.* Edited, with an Introduction, by E. Dowden ('Golden Treasury' series), 1895.

9. *Selections from the Poems of Robert Southey.* Edited with a biographical and critical Introduction, by Sidney R. Thompson ('Canterbury Poets'), 1888.

BIOGRAPHICAL TABLE

CONTAINING THE CHIEF EVENTS OF SOUTHEY'S LIFE AND SOME IMPORTANT DATES IN THE LIVES OF CONTEMPORARY WRITERS

S. = Robert Southey, the Poet.
Thomas, &c. S. = Thomas, &c. Southey.
S. T. C. = Samuel Taylor Coleridge.

A.D.	ÆT.	
1735	—	About this year Thomas Southey, son of a yeoman farmer of Wellington in Somerset, settles on a farm at Holford, a village in the Quantock Hills.
1754	—	[George Crabbe born.]
1762	—	[William Lisle Bowles born.]
1763	—	[Samuel Rogers born.]
1764	—	[*The Traveller* (O. Goldsmith).]
1765	—	[Percy's *Reliques*.]
1770	—	[William Wordsworth born. James Hogg born. Chatterton died. *The Deserted Village* (Goldsmith).]
1771	—	[Gray died. Scott born. *The Minstrel* (Beattie).]
1772	—	Robert Southey, a linen-draper at Bristol, (born 1745, second son of Thomas S.), married Margaret Hill. To them were born nine children, five of whom died young. The surviving children were Robert, Thomas, Henry Herbert, and Edward. [S. T. Coleridge born.]
1774	—	ROBERT SOUTHEY born at Bristol, August 12, his parents' second and eldest surviving child.
1775	1	[Charles Lamb born. W. Savage Landor born.]
1776	2	During 1776–80 S. spends most of his time with his mother's half-sister, Miss Tyler, at Bath.
1777	3	Thomas S. born. [H. Hallam born. Thomas Campbell born.]
1778	4	[W. Hazlitt born.]
1779	5	[Thomas Moore born.]
1780	6	S. sent as a day-boy to a school kept by a Mr. Foot at Bristol.
1781	7	S. removed to a school at Corston, nine miles from Bristol. [*The Library* (Crabbe).]
1782	8	(Or Jan. 1783) S. placed as a day-boarder at a school at Bristol kept by a Mr. Williams, spending his holidays in general with Miss Tyler. From 1778 onwards Miss Tyler regularly takes him to the theatre. He reads Shakespeare and Beaumont and Fletcher before he is eight years old. He also reads *The Faerie Queene* about this time. [Cowper's first volume of *Poems*.]
1783	9	Henry Herbert Southey born (d. 1865). S. begins to write verses, Epics on the Trojan Brutus, Egbert, &c. [*The Village* (Crabbe).]
1784	10	[Dr. Johnson died. Leigh Hunt born.]
1785	11	[De Quincey born. Thomas Love Peacock born. Henry Kirke White born. *The Task* (Cowper).]

A.D.	ÆT.	
1786	12	At the end of this year or early in 1787 S. sent as a day-boy to a Mr. Lewis, a clergyman in Bristol, who took pupils. [*Poems* (Robert Burns, Kilmarnock ed.). Caroline Bowles born.]
1788	14	S. goes to school at Westminster, where his chief friends are C. W. W. Wynn, subsequently Secretary at War and Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, and G. C. Bedford. [Byron born.]
1789	15	[*Sonnets* (W. L. Bowles). *The Loves of the Plants* (Darwin).]
1790	16	[Burke's *Reflections on the French Revolution*.]
1791	17	[John Wesley died.]
1792	18	S. expelled from Westminster for writing an article in a school newspaper, *The Flagellant*, ascribing the invention of flogging to the devil. He returns to Miss Tyler at Bristol. His father fails in business, and dies just after S., having been refused admission at Christ Church on account of the expulsion from Westminster, has matriculated at Balliol College. [Shelley born. Keble born. *Pleasures of Memory* (Rogers).]
1793	19	S. goes into residence at Balliol (Jan.), his expenses (as at Westminster) being paid by his uncle, the Rev. Herbert Hill, Chaplain to the British Factory at Lisbon. Reads and is much influenced by Epictetus. Friendship with Edmund Seward. S. writes first draft of *Joan of Arc* in Long Vacation. Shocked by the fate of the Girondins, and especially by the execution of Brissot (Oct. 31). Begins to think of retiring to America, there to live an Arcadian life in the forest. [*Evening Walk* and *Descriptive Sketches* (Wordsworth). *Tam o'Shanter*, &c. (Burns). Felicia Hemans born.]
1794	20	S. decides that he cannot conscientiously take Orders, as his uncle, Mr. Hill, had wished. His religious opinions at this time Unitarian. Meets S. T. Coleridge for the first time at Oxford (June). Together with four or five friends they form a scheme for a communistic settlement in America—Pantisocracy. S. writes Acts II and III of *The Fall of Robespierre*, S. T. C. supplying Act I. *Wat Tyler* written. *Madoc* begun. Miss Tyler breaks off all relations with S. on hearing of Pantisocracy and of his engagement to Edith Fricker (Oct.). S. proposes that for financial reasons Pantisocracy should first be tried in Wales instead of in America. *Poems by Robert Lovell and Robert Southey* published (autumn: dated on title-page, 1795).
1795	21	S. introduced to C. Lamb by S. T. C. (Jan.). S. and S. T. C. lecture at Bristol. Death of Edmund Seward (June). S. definitely declines Mr. Hill's proposal that he should take Orders, and decides to read for the bar. Abandons Pantisocracy, thereby causing a breach with S. T. C. Marries Edith Fricker, Nov. 14, and immediately after the wedding starts with Mr. Hill for Lisbon, leaving Mrs. S. in the care of Cottle's sisters. The marriage for the time kept secret. S. T. C. marries Sarah Fricker (Oct. 4). [Keats born. T. Carlyle born.]
1796	22	*Joan of Arc* published by Joseph Cottle. S. returns from Lisbon in May and settles with his wife at Bristol. Partial reconciliation with S. T. C. Death of S.'s brother-in-law, Lovell. S. writing *Letters from Spain and Portugal* and contributing also to *The Monthly Magazine*. Reads William Taylor's translations from German writers. [Burns died. Hartley Coleridge born. *Poems*, 1st ed., S. T. C.]

A.D.	ÆT.	
1797	23	*Letters from Spain and Portugal* and *Poems* published. S. in London and at Burton (near Christchurch in Hampshire) studying law. Becomes acquainted with J. Rickman, afterwards one of his closest friends. C. Lamb visits S. at Burton. S. receives an annuity of £160 from C. W. W. Wynn.
1798	24	S. writes verses for *The Morning Post* at a guinea a week, which he continues to do up to 1803. Visits Norwich, where he makes acquaintance with William Taylor and Dr. Sayers. Settles at Westbury, two miles from Bristol (June). In constant intercourse with Humphry Davy. Editing first vol. of *The Annual Anthology*. Second ed. of *Joan of Arc*. S. in indifferent health at end of this year. [*Lyrical Ballads* (Coleridge and Wordsworth). *Gebir* (W. S. Landor).]
1799	25	Westbury; London; Burton. *Madoc* finished (July 11). *Thalaba* begun (July 12). More complete reconciliation with S. T. C. (Aug.). S. and his wife visit the Coleridges at Nether Stowey. Walking tour with S. T. C. in Devonshire. First volume of *The Annual Anthology* and second volume of *Poems* published. S. reads and greatly admires *Gebir*. His health still unsatisfactory. [T. Hood born. *Pleasures of Hope* (Campbell).]
1800	26	S. collaborates with J. Cottle in preparing an edition of Chatterton's *Works* for the benefit of the latter's sister. Leaves England for Portugal with Mrs. S. for the benefit of his health (April). *Thalaba* finished (July). S. begins to collect materials for a *History of Portugal*. S. T. C. settles at Greta Hall, Keswick (Aug.). Second volume of *The Annual Anthology* published. [Cowper died. Macaulay born. Henry Taylor born.]
1801	27	*Thalaba* published. *Curse of Kehama* begun (May). S. returns to England (June). Completely abandons all idea of adopting the law as a profession. Begins to review again, a task-work from which he is unable to free himself for the rest of his active life. Stays with S. T. C. at Keswick (Sept.). Accepts post of private secretary to Mr. Corry, Chancellor of the Exchequer for Ireland. [*Lyrical Ballads*, 2nd ed. (pub. Jan.). *Poems* ('Thos. Little'). *Tales of Wonder* (M. G. Lewis).]
1802	28	Death of S.'s mother (Jan.). S. resigns his post as secretary. At Bristol (May). Birth of his first child, Margaret (Sept.). S. translating *Amadis of Gaul*, writing portions of a *History of Portugal*, reviewing, and continuing *Curse of Kehama*. Chatterton's *Works* (ed. Southey and Cottle) published by subscription. Peace of Amiens. This of critical importance in the development of S.'s political opinions. 'It restored in me the English feeling which had been deadened; it placed me in sympathy with my country, bringing me thus into that natural and healthy state of mind upon which time, and knowledge, and reflection were sure to produce their proper and salutary effect.' (*Warter*, iii, 320.) [Erasmus Darwin died.]
1803	29	Bristol. *Amadis of Gaul* published. Death of Margaret S. (Aug.). S. and his wife go to stay with S. T. C. at Keswick (Sept.).
1804	30	Keswick. S. T. C. starts for Malta (April 2). Edith May S. born (May 1). S. finally correcting *Madoc* for the press. *Letters from England by Don Manuel Espriella* begun.

A.D.	ÆT.	
1805	31	*Madoc* and *Metrical Tales and Other Poems* published. S. visits Scotland, and stays with Sir W. Scott at Ashestiel (Oct.). Plans to go to Lisbon for two years in the following spring. [*Lay of the Last Minstrel* (Scott). *The Prelude* finished (Wordsworth).]
1806	32	*Curse of Kehama* resumed. S. visits William Taylor at Norwich (April). Hopes to be given the Secretaryship of the Legation at Lisbon. S. T. C. returns to England (Aug.). *Chronicle of the Cid* and *Palmerin of England* begun. Herbert S. born (Oct. 11). S. undertakes to edit Henry Kirke White's *Remains* gratuitously for the White family. [*Simonidea* (Landor). *Odes and Epistles* (T. Moore). Elizabeth Barrett born.]
1807	33	Wynn obtains for S. a pension from Government of £144 net per annum, and S. therefore resigns the annuity of £160 paid him by Wynn since 1797. S. declines Scott's suggestion that he should contribute to the *Edinburgh Review*, on the ground of his complete disagreement with its principles. Decides to settle permanently at Greta Hall. *Palmerin of England, Letters from England by Don Manuel Espriella, Remains of Henry Kirke White*, and *Specimens of the later English Poets* (edited in conjunction with G. C. Bedford) published. *Madoc*, 2nd ed. S. begins to write the *History of Brazil* as the first part of his projected *History of Portugal*. Plans an edition of the *Morte d'Arthur*. [*Poems in Two Volumes* (Wordsworth). *The Parish Register* (Crabbe). *Hours of Idleness* (Byron).]
1808	34	Emma S. born (Feb.). S. meets W. S. Landor for the first time at Bristol. Landor urges him to continue his mythological poems, and offers to pay for the printing. Stung by this generous offer, S. resumes *The Curse of Kehama*, though without thought of accepting Landor's proposal. Prophesies that Spain will eventually prove Buonaparte's destruction. Plans a poem on Pelayo. S. T. C. domesticated with Wordsworth at Allan Bank, Grasmere (Sept.). *The Quarterly Review* planned. S. writes an article on the Baptist Mission in India for the first number, published Feb. 1809. *Chronicle of the Cid* published. [*Marmion* (Scott).]
1809	35	Bertha S. born (March 27), Emma S. died (May). S. T. C. publishes first number of *The Friend* at Penrith (June 1). S. takes a lease of Greta Hall for twenty-one years. Continues *History of Brazil*. Corresponds with Ebenezer Elliott, who asks him to criticize his poems. Undertakes to write the historical part of Ballantyne's new *Edinburgh Annual Register* at a salary of £400 a year. Finishes *Curse of Kehama*. Plans a poem on Robin Hood. *Roderick* begun (Dec. 2). *Thalaba*, 2nd ed. [Tract on the Convention of Cintra (Wordsworth). *English Bards and Scotch Reviewers* (Byron). *Gertrude of Wyoming* (Campbell). A. Tennyson, Charles Darwin, and W. E. Gladstone born.]
1810	36	*Curse of Kehama* and first vol. of *History of Brazil* published. Katharine S. born. S. T. C. spends four or five months at Greta Hall before leaving in October for London with Basil Montagu. Breach between S. T. C. and Wordsworth. [*The Borough* (Crabbe). *The Lady of the Lake* (Scott).]

A.D.	ÆT.	
1811	37	S. plans *Oliver Newman* and *The Book of the Church*. At work on *Life of Nelson*, an expansion of an article in the fifth number of the *Quarterly Review*. Visits Landor at Llanthony (July ?). Shelley at Keswick, winter of 1811–12. S. writes an article in the *Quarterly* (Oct.) on the Bell and Lancaster system of Education, advocating the establishment in every parish of a national school. This article subsequently enlarged and published separately. *Curse of Kehama*, 2nd ed. [Thackeray born. *Don Roderick* (Scott).]
1812	38	S. T. C. at Greta Hall, Feb. 23–March 26,—his last visit to the Lake Country. Isabel S. born (Nov.). Dr. Bell at Keswick. *Omniana* published. [Charles Dickens and Robert Browning born. *Tales in Verse* (Crabbe). *Count Julian* (Landor). *Childe Harolde*, Cantos i and ii (Byron). *Rejected Addresses* (J. and H. Smith).]
1813	39	S. ceases to write for the *Edinburgh Annual Register* owing to irregularity of payment. Visits Streatham and London (Sept.). Meets Lord Byron at Holland House. Appointed Poet Laureate (partly on Scott's recommendation) on Scott declining the office (Oct.). *Life of Nelson* published. *The Doctor* begun. *Ode Written during Negotiations with Buonaparte.* [*Rokeby; The Bridal of Triermain* (Scott). *Remorse* (S. T. C.) performed at Drury Lane (Jan.).]
1814	40	S. endeavours, through Cottle, to induce S. T. C. to return to Greta Hall (April). Failing even to get an answer from S. T. C. to his letters, he gets up a subscription among friends and relations to pay Hartley C.'s college expenses (autumn). Begins correspondence with Bernard Barton. *Roderick* published. S. appointed Member of the Royal Academy of Madrid. *A Tale of Paraguay* begun. [*The Excursion* (Wordsworth). *The Feast of the Poets* (Leigh Hunt).]
1815	41	*Oliver Newman* begun. *Minor Poems* (rearranged, &c.) published 3 vols. *Roderick*, 2nd ed. Tour in Holland and Belgium with Mrs. and Edith S. and Edward Nash, the artist (Sept.–Oct.). [First collective ed. of Wordsworth's poems published. *The White Doe of Rylstone* (Wordsworth). *The Lord of the Isles* (Scott).]
1816	42	Death of Herbert S. (April 17),—a blow from which S. never recovers. *The Poet's Pilgrimage* and *The Lay of the Laureate* published. An endeavour made by the Ministry to induce S. to conduct a political journal in London in opposition to revolutionary principles. This proposal S. declines. At this time S. advocates as palliatives of social distress the establishment of savings banks and a national system of education, the colonization of waste lands in the British Isles, and the encouragement of emigration. [*Alastor* (Shelley). *Christabel* (S. T. C.). *The Story of Rimini* (Leigh Hunt). *Childe Harold*, Canto iii (Byron).]
1817	43	*Wat Tyler* surreptitiously published (spring). S., in consequence, attacked by William Smith, member for Norwich, in House of Commons as 'a renegado' (March 14). Replies in a letter to *The Courier* (reprinted in his Essays), and is defended in that paper by S. T. C. Declines a proposal that he should write chief leading article in *The Times*, (and, apparently, act in some measure as editor), at a salary of £2,000 a year, together with a share in the profits. Tour through

A.D.	ÆT.	
		Switzerland to Italian Lakes and back through Black Forest, Cologne, and Brussels (May–Aug.). *Life of Wesley* begun. *Morte d'Arthur* and *History of Brazil*, vol. ii, published.
		[*Sibylline Leaves ; Biographia Literaria* (S. T. C.). *Poems* (Keats). *Lalla Rookh* (Moore). *Harold the Dauntless* (Scott). The *Whistlecraft* Poem (J. H. Frere).]
1818	44	S. refuses the offer of the post of Librarian to the Advocates' Library, Edinburgh. Caroline Bowles writes to him (April 25) to ask his opinion of a MS. poem, thus beginning a correspondence continued without interruption until their marriage in 1839.
		[*Childe Harold*, Canto iv (Byron). *Revolt of Islam* (Shelley). *Poems* (C. Lamb, in his collected Works). *Foliage* (Leigh Hunt). *Endymion* (Keats).]
1819	45	Cuthbert S. born (Feb.). Tour in Scotland with Rickman and Telford (autumn). *History of Brazil*, vol. iii, published. S. learns from Wynn of the existence of the Dedication of *Don Juan*.
		[*Peter Bell* and *The Waggoner* (Wordsworth). *Don Juan*, Canto i, &c. (Byron). *Tales of the Hall* (Crabbe). *Dramatic Scenes* (Procter). *Poems, Rosalind and Helen, The Euganean Hills, Hymn to Intellectual Beauty, The Cenci* (Shelley). J. Ruskin, A. H. Clough, and Charles Kingsley born.]
1820	46	*Colloquies on the Prospects of Society* and *Book of the Church* begun. In Wales and London (April, May, and June). Meets Caroline Bowles for the first time at Chelsea. D.C.L., Oxford Univ. (June 14). *Life of Wesley* published.
		[*The River Duddon ; A Series of Sonnets* (Wordsworth). *Lamia, Isabella, Hyperion*, &c. (Keats). *Prometheus Bound* (Shelley). *Ellen Fitzarthur* (Caroline Bowles).]
1821	47	*Vision of Judgement* published. Its Preface involves S. in a public controversy with Byron. Hearing that his friend John May has lost his fortune, S. makes over to him his entire savings, amounting to £625. *Expedition of Orsua* published.
		[Keats died. *Adonais* (Shelley). *Cain*, &c. (Byron).]
1822	48	*History of the Peninsular War*, vol. i, published.
		[*Ecclesiastical Sketches* (Wordsworth). *Hellas* (Shelley). *The Widow's Tale* (Caroline Bowles). Shelley drowned.]
1823	49	Caroline Bowles at Greta Hall (Sept.). S. writes to her (Nov. 4) to suggest that they should collaborate in a poem on *Robin Hood*. Visits London (Nov.). Renews his friendship with C. Lamb, which had been momentarily interrupted through the latter misunderstanding a reference by S. in the *Quarterly* to the *Essays of Elia*.
		[*The Loves of the Angels* (T. Moore). *Essays of Elia* (Lamb).]
1824	50	*Robin Hood* begun. *The Book of the Church* and *History of the Peninsular War*, vol. ii, published.
		[Byron died. *Imaginary Conversations*, vols. i and ii (Landor).]
1825	51	*Vindiciae Ecclesiae Anglicanae* begun,—an answer to C. Butler's reply to *The Book of the Church*. S. now, as always, strongly opposed to Catholic Emancipation. Tour in Belgium and Holland with Henry Taylor and two other friends (June and July). S. is laid up with an injured foot at Leyden, and stays there for a fortnight with the poet Bilderdijk, whose wife had translated *Roderick* into Dutch verse. *A Tale of Paraguay* published.

A.D.	ÆT.	
1826	52	S. visits Caroline Bowles at Buckland, near Lymington. Tours in Holland (June) with H. Taylor and Rickman. During his absence is returned to Parliament for the borough of Downton, through the influence of Lord Radnor; but refuses to accept the honour. Death of Isabel S. (July 16). From this last blow Mrs. S. never really recovers. *Vindiciae Ecclesiae Anglicanae* published. [*Solitary Hours* (Caroline Bowles).]
1827	53	S. undertakes to edit the poems of John Jones, a servant in a Yorkshire family, for Jones's benefit, and to prefix a sketch of the lives of uneducated poets. Mrs. S. plainly failing in health. [*Poems* (T. Hood). *The Christian Year* (Keble). *Poems by Two Brothers* (A. and C. Tennyson).]
1828	54	In London in order to undergo an operation (May). His portrait painted by Sir T. Lawrence for Sir R. Peel. Visits Caroline Bowles at Buckland. Death of his uncle, Mr. Hill (Sept.). Is paid £150 by Murray for a paper in the *Quarterly* on the Roman Catholic Question and Ireland, strongly opposing Catholic Emancipation. [*History of Peninsular War*, vol. i (Sir W. Napier).]
1829	55	*Lives of Uneducated Poets—Prefixed to Verses by John Jones* published. *All for Love* and *The Legend of a Cock and a Hen* (1 vol.), and *Colloquies on the Progress and Prospects of Society* published. Mrs. Coleridge and Sara C. leave Greta Hall on the marriage of the latter to H. N. Coleridge, Mrs. C. subsequently taking up her residence with her daughter and son-in-law. S. continues to advocate the establishment of Co-operative Societies. [*Chapters on Churchyards* (Caroline Bowles). *Imaginary Conversations*, second series (Landor).]
1830	56	S. engaged in writing *Life of Bunyan* and *Naval History of England*. *Life of Bunyan* published, prefixed to an edition of *Pilgrim's Progress*. [Hazlitt died. *Poems, Chiefly Lyrical* (A. Tennyson).]
1831	57	S. visits Caroline Bowles at Buckland (Jan.). Visits Dr. Bell at Cheltenham (June). *Select Works of British Poets from Chaucer to Jonson* published. S. continues (as, like Wordsworth, he had done from the first) strongly to oppose Parliamentary Reform. [*Corn Law Rhymes* (Ebenezer Elliott).]
1832	58	*Essays, Moral and Political* published (Jan. or ? Dec. 1831). *History of the Peninsular War*, vol. iii, published. Death of Dr. Bell, who leaves S. £1000, with a request that he should write his Life. S. refuses offer of a Professorship of History at Durham University. Landor visits S. at Keswick (June). [Sir W. Scott died. Crabbe died. Bentham died. Dr. Arnold buys Fox How.]
1833	59	Correspondence with Lord Ashley on Factory Legislation. S. begins to work at Dr. Bell's *Life and Correspondence*. *Naval History of England*, vols. i and ii, published. [*Pauline* (R. Browning). *Poems* (Hartley Coleridge).]
1834	60	*The Doctor, &c.*, vols. i and ii, published. Edith May S. marries the Rev. J. W. Warter (Jan.). *Naval History*, vol. iii, published. *Life of Cowper* begun. Mrs. S. loses her reason (Sept.) and is removed to the asylum at York. [S. T. C. died (July 25). C. Lamb died (Dec. 27). *Philip van Artevelde* (H. Taylor).]

A.D.	ÆT.	
1835	61	S. declines the offer of a baronetcy from Sir R. Peel, who then obtains for him an additional pension of £300 a year. Mrs. S., though without regaining her reason, so far recovers as to be allowed to return to Keswick (March). Publication of *Life and Works of Cowper* (15 vols., 1835–37) begun. [*Yarrow Revisited and other Poems* (Wordsworth). Mrs. Hemans died. James Hogg died. *Paracelsus* (R. Browning).]
1836	62	Tour in West of England with Cuthbert S. (Oct.–Feb. 1837). Meets Landor at Clifton and stays at Bremhill with W. L. Bowles. [*Pericles and Aspasia* (Landor). *The Birthday* (Caroline Bowles). William Taylor of Norwich died.]
1837	63	S. corresponds with Charlotte Brontë in answer to a request for his criticism of her poems. 'Mr. Southey's letter was kind and admirable, a little stringent, but it did me good' (C. Brontë). Publication of collected edition of S.'s poems in 10 vols. begun. Cuthbert S. matriculates at Oxford. Mrs. S. died (Nov. 16). [*Strafford* (R. Browning). *The French Revolution* (T. Carlyle).]
1838	64	Tour in Normandy, Brittany, and Touraine with Cuthbert S., H. C. Robinson, and three other friends (Aug., Sept.). S. now first begins to show signs of failing powers. At Buckland with Caroline Bowles (Oct.–Dec.).
1839	65	Bertha S. marries her cousin Herbert Hill. S. marries Caroline Bowles (June 5). Soon afterwards his mind fails rapidly, until its powers are completely lost. In this condition he lives at Keswick until his death.
1843	69	Robert Southey died (March 21). Buried in Crosthwaite Churchyard.

PREFACES

TO THE COLLECTED EDITION OF TEN VOLUMES, PUBLISHED IN 1837, 1838.

PREFACE TO THE FIRST VOLUME

At the age of sixty-three I have undertaken to collect and edite my Poetical Works, with the last corrections that I can expect to bestow upon them. They have obtained a reputation equal to my wishes; and I have this ground for hoping it may not be deemed hereafter more than commensurate with their deserts, that it has been gained without ever accommodating myself to the taste or fashion of the times. Thus to collect and revise them is a duty which I owe to that part of the Public by whom they have been auspiciously received, and to those who will take a lively concern in my good name when I shall have departed.

The arrangement was the first thing to be considered. In this the order wherein the respective poems were written has been observed, so far as was compatible with a convenient classification. Such order is useful to those who read critically, and desire to trace the progress of an author's mind in his writings; and by affixing dates to the minor pieces, under whatever head they are disposed, the object is sufficiently attained.

Next came the question of correction. There was no difficulty with those poems which were composed after the author had acquired his art (so far as he has acquired it), and after his opinions were matured. It was only necessary to bear in mind the risk there must ever be of injuring a poem by verbal alterations made long after it was written; inasmuch as it must be impossible to recall the precise train of thought in which any passage was conceived, and the considerations upon which not the single verse alone, but the whole sentence, or paragraph, had been constructed: but with regard to more important changes, there could be no danger of introducing any discrepance in style. With juvenile pieces the case is different. From these the faults of diction have been weeded wherever it could be done without more trouble than the composition originally cost, and than the piece itself was worth. But inherent faults of conception and structure are incurable; and it would have been mere waste of time to recompose what it was impossible otherwise to amend.

If these poems had been now for the first time to be made public, there are some among them which, instead of being committed to the press, would have been consigned to the flames; not for any disgrace which could be reflected upon me by the crude compositions of my youth, nor for any harm which they could possibly do the reader, but merely that they might not cumber the collection. But '*nescit vox missa reverti*'. Pirated editions would hold out as a recommendation, that they contained what I had chosen to suppress, and thus it becomes prudent, and therefore proper, that such pieces should be retained.

It has ever been a rule with me when I have imitated a passage, or borrowed an expression, to acknowledge the specific

obligation. Upon the present occasion it behoves me to state the more general and therefore more important obligations which I am conscious of owing either to my predecessors, or my contemporaries.

My first attempts in verse were much too early to be imitative, but I was fortunate enough to find my way, when very young, into the right path. I read the *Jerusalem Delivered* and the *Orlando Furioso* again and again, in Hoole's translations: it was for the sake of their stories that I perused and re-perused these poems with ever new delight; and by bringing them thus within my reach in boyhood, the translator rendered me a service which, when I look back upon my intellectual life, I cannot estimate too highly. I owe him much also for his notes, not only for the information concerning other Italian romances which they imparted, but also for introducing me to Spenser;—how early, an incident which I well remember may show. Going with a relation into Bull's circulating library at Bath (an excellent one for those days), and asking whether they had the *Faery Queen*, the person who managed the shop said 'yes, they had it, but it was in obsolete language, and the young gentleman would not understand it'. But I, who had learned all I then knew of the history of England from Shakespear, and who had moreover read Beaumont and Fletcher, found no difficulty in Spenser's English, and felt in the beauty of his versification a charm in poetry of which I had never been fully sensible before. From that time I took Spenser for my master. I drank also betimes of Chaucer's well. The taste which had been acquired in that school was confirmed by Percy's *Reliques* and Warton's *History of English Poetry*; and a little later by Homer and the Bible. It was not likely to be corrupted afterwards.

My school-boy verses savoured of Gray, Mason, and my predecessor Warton; and in the best of my juvenile pieces it may be seen how much the writer's mind had been imbued by Akenside. I am conscious also of having derived much benefit at one time from Cowper, and more from Bowles; for which, and for the delight which his poems gave me at an age when we are most susceptible of such delight, my good friend at Bremhill, to whom I was then and long afterwards personally unknown, will allow me to make this grateful and cordial acknowledgment.

My obligation to Dr. Sayers is of a different kind. Every one who has an ear for metre and a heart for poetry, must have felt how perfectly the metre of Collins's *Ode to Evening* is in accordance with the imagery and the feeling. None of the experiments which were made of other unrhymed stanzas proved successful. They were either in strongly marked and well-known measures which unavoidably led the reader to expect rhyme, and consequently baulked him when he looked for it; or they were in stanzas as cumbrous as they were ill constructed. Dr. Sayers went upon a different principle, and succeeded admirably. I read his *Dramatic Sketches of Northern Mythology* when they were first published, and convinced myself when I had acquired some skill in versification, that the kind of verse in which his choruses were composed was not less applicable to narration than to lyrical poetry. Soon after I had begun the Arabian romance, for which this measure seemed the most appropriate vehicle, *Gebir* fell into my hands, and my verse was greatly improved by it, both in vividness and strength. Several years elapsed before I knew that Walter Landor was the author, and more before I had the good fortune to meet the person to whom I felt myself thus beholden. The days which I have passed with him in the Vale of Ewias, at Como, and lastly in the neighbourhood of Bristol, are some of those which have left with me 'a joy for memory'.

I have thus acknowledged all the specific obligations to my elders or contemporaries in the art, of which I am distinctly conscious. The advantages

arising from intimate intercourse with those who were engaged in similar pursuits cannot be in like manner specified, because in their nature they are imperceptible; but of such advantages no man has ever possessed more or greater, than at different times it has been my lot to enjoy. Personal attachment first, and family circumstances afterwards, connected me long and closely with Mr. Coleridge; and three-and-thirty years have ratified a friendship with Mr. Wordsworth, which we believe will not terminate with this life, and which it is a pleasure for us to know will be continued and cherished as an heir-loom by those who are dearest to us both.

When I add what has been the greatest of all advantages, that I have passed more than half my life in retirement, conversing with books rather than men, constantly and unweariably engaged in literary pursuits, communing with my own heart, and taking that course which upon mature consideration seemed best to myself, I have said every thing necessary to account for the characteristics of my poetry, whatever they may be.

It was in a mood resembling in no slight degree that wherewith a person in sound health, both of body and mind, makes his will and sets his worldly affairs in order, that I entered upon the serious task of arranging and revising the whole of my poetical works. What, indeed, was it but to bring in review before me the dreams and aspirations of my youth, and the feelings whereto I had given that free utterance which by the usages of this world is permitted to us in poetry, and in poetry alone? Of the smaller pieces in this collection there is scarcely one concerning which I cannot vividly call to mind when and where it was composed. I have perfect recollection of the spots where many, not of the scenes only, but of the images which I have described from nature, were observed and noted. And how would it be possible for me to forget the interest taken in these poems, especially the longer and more ambitious works, by those persons nearest and dearest to me then, who witnessed their growth and completion? Well may it be called a serious task thus to resuscitate the past! But serious though it be, it is not painful to one who knows that the end of his journey cannot be far distant, and, by the blessing of God, looks on to its termination with sure and certain hope.

Keswick, May 10, 1837.

PREFACE TO THE SECOND VOLUME,

BEING THE FIRST OF TWO VOLUMES ENTITLED 'JUVENILE AND MINOR POEMS', BEGINNING WITH 'THE TRIUMPH OF WOMAN', AND ENDING WITH 'HYMN TO THE PENATES'

THE earliest pieces in these Juvenile and Minor Poems were written before the writer had left school; between the date of these and of the latest there is an interval of six-and-forty years: as much difference, therefore, may be perceived in them, as in the different stages of life from boyhood to old age.

Some of the earliest appeared in a little volume published at Bath in the autumn of 1794, with this title:—'*Poems, containing the Retrospect, &c.* by Robert Lovell and Robert Southey, 1795;' and with this motto—

'Minuentur atrae
Carmine curae.' *Horace.*

At the end of that volume, *Joan of Arc* was announced as to be published by subscription.

Others were published at Bristol, 1797, in a single volume, with this motto from Akenside :—

'Goddess of the Lyre,—
with thee comes
Majestic Truth; and where Truth deigns to come
Her sister Liberty will not be far.'

A second volume followed at Bristol in 1799, after the second edition of *Joan of Arc*, and commencing with the *Vision of the Maid of Orleans*. The motto to this was from the Epilogue to Spenser's *Shepherds' Calendar* :—

'The better, please; the worse, displease:
I ask no more.'

In the third edition of *Joan of Arc*, the *Vision* was printed separately, at the end; and its place was supplied in the second edition of the Poems by miscellaneous pieces.

A separate volume, entitled *Metrical Tales and other Poems*, was published in 1805, with this advertisement :—'These Poems were published some years ago in the *Annual Anthology*. (Bristol, 1799, 1800.) They have now been revised and printed in this collected form, because they have pleased those readers whom the Author was most desirous of pleasing. Let them be considered as the desultory productions of a man sedulously employed upon better things.'

These various pieces were re-arranged in three volumes, under the title of *Minor Poems*, in 1815, with this motto,

'Nos haec novimus esse nihil;'

and they were published a second time in the same form, 1823.

The Ballads and Metrical Tales contained in those volumes, belong to a different part of this collection; their other contents are comprised here; and the present volume consists, with very few exceptions, of pieces written in youth or early manhood. One of these written in my twentieth year, not having been published at the time, would never have been made public by my own act and deed; but as *Wat Tyler* obtained considerable notoriety upon its surreptitious publication, it seemed proper that a production which will be specially noticed whenever the author shall be delivered over to the biographers, should be included here. They who may desire to know more than is stated in the advertisement now prefixed to it, are referred to a Letter addressed to William Smith, Esq. M.P., 1817, reprinted in the second volume of my *Essays Moral and Political*, 1832.

The second volume of this part of the Collection contains one juvenile piece, and many which were written in early manhood. The remainder were composed in middle or later life, and comprise (with one exception, that will more conveniently be arranged elsewhere,) all the odes which as Poet Laureat I have written upon national occasions. Of these the *Carmen Triumphale*, and the *Carmina Aulica*, were separately published in quarto in 1814, and reprinted together in a little volume in 1821.

The Juvenile and Minor Poems in this Collection bear an inconsiderable proportion to those of substantive length: for a small part only of my youthful effusions were spared from those autos-da-fé in which from time to time piles upon piles have been consumed. In middle life works of greater extent, or of a different kind, left me little leisure for occasional poetry; the impulse ceased, and latterly the inclination was so seldom felt, that it required an effort to call it forth.

Sir William Davenant, in the Preface to *Gondibert*, 'took occasion to accuse and condemn all those hasty digestions of thought which were published in his youth; a sentence, said he, not pronounced out of melancholy rigour, but from a cheerful obedience to the just authority of experience. For that grave mistress of the world, experience, (in whose profitable school those before the Flood stayed long, but we, like wanton children, come thither late, yet too soon are called out of it, and fetched home by death,) hath taught me that the engenderings of unripe age become

abortive and deformed; and that 'tis a high presumption to entertain a nation (who are a poet's standing guest, and require monarchical respect,) with hasty provisions; as if a poet might imitate the familiar despatch of faulconers, mount his Pegasus, unhood his Muse, and, with a few flights, boast he hath provided a feast for a prince. Such posting upon Pegasus I have long since foreborne.' Yet this eminently thoughtful poet was so far from seeking to suppress the crude compositions which he thus condemned, that he often expressed a great desire to see all his pieces collected in one volume; and, conformably to his wish, they were so collected, after his decease, by his widow and his friend Herringman the bookseller.

Agreeing with Davenant in condemning the greater part of my juvenile pieces, it is only as crudities that I condemn them; for in all that I have written, whether in prose or verse, there has never been a line which for any compunctious reason, living or dying, I could wish to blot.

Davenant had not changed his opinion of his own youthful productions so as to overlook in his age the defects which he had once clearly perceived; but he knew that pieces which it would indeed have been presumptuous to reproduce on the score of their merit, might yet be deemed worthy of preservation on other grounds; that to his family and friends, and to those who might take any interest in English poetry hereafter, they would possess peculiar value, as characteristic memorials of one who had held no inconsiderable place in the literature of his own times; feeling, too, that he was not likely to be forgotten by posterity, he thought that after the specimen which he had produced in his *Gondibert* of a great and elaborate poem, his early attempts would be regarded with curiosity by such of his successors as should, like him, study poetry as an art,—for as an art it must be studied by those who would excel in it, though excellence in it is not attainable by art alone.

The cases are very few in which any thing more can be inferred from juvenile poetry, than that the aspirant possesses imitative talent, and the power of versifying, for which, as for music, there must be a certain natural aptitude. It is not merely because 'they have lacked culture and the inspiring aid of books',[1] that so many poets who have been 'sown by Nature', have 'wanted the accomplishment of verse', and brought forth no fruit after their kind. Men of the highest culture, of whose poetical temperament no doubt can be entertained, and who had 'taken to the height the measure of themselves', have yet failed in their endeavour to become poets, for want of that accomplishment. It is frequently possessed without any other qualification, or any capacity for improvement; but then the innate and incurable defect that renders it abortive, is at once apparent.

The state of literature in this kingdom during the last fifty years has produced the same effect upon poetry that academies produce upon painting; in both arts every possible assistance is afforded to imitative talents, and in both they are carried as far as the talent of imitation can reach. But there is one respect in which poetry differs widely from the sister arts. Its fairest promise frequently proves deceitful, whereas both in painting and music the early indications of genius are unequivocal. The children who were called musical prodigies, have become great musicians; and great painters, as far as their history is known, have displayed in childhood that accuracy of eye, and dexterity of hand, and shaping faculty, which are the prime requisites for their calling. But it is often found that young poets of whom great expectations were formed, have made no progress, and have even fallen short of their first performances. It may be said that this is because men apply themselves to music and to painting as their professions, but that no one makes poetry the business of his

[1] Wordsworth.

life. This, however, is not the only reason: the indications, as has already been observed, are far less certain; and the circumstances of society are far less favourable for the moral and intellectual culture which is required for all the higher branches of poetry, . . . all indeed that deserves the name.

My advice as to publishing, has often been asked by young poets, who suppose that experience has qualified me to give it, and who have not yet learnt how seldom advice is taken, and how little therefore it is worth. As a general rule, it may be said that one who is not deceived in the estimate which he has formed of his own powers, can neither write too much in his youth, nor publish too little. It cannot, however, be needful to caution the present race of poetical adventurers against hurrying with their productions to the press, for there are obstacles enough in the way of publication. Looking back upon my own career, and acknowledging my imprudence in this respect, I have nevertheless no cause to wish that I had pursued a different course. In this, as in other circumstances of my life, I have reason to be thankful to that merciful Providence which shaped the ends that I had roughly hewn for myself.

Keswick, Sept. 30, 1837.

PREFACE TO THE THIRD VOLUME,

BEING THE SECOND OF 'JUVENILE AND MINOR POEMS

In a former Preface my obligations to Akenside were acknowledged, with especial reference to the *Hymn to the Penates*; the earliest of my Inscriptions also originated in the pleasure with which I perused those of this favourite author. Others of a later date bear a nearer resemblance to the general character of Chiabrera's epitaphs. Those which relate to the Peninsular War are part of a series which I once hoped to have completed. The epitaph for Bishop Butler was originally composed in the lapidary style, to suit the monument in Bristol Cathedral: it has been remodelled here, that I might express myself more at length, and in a style more accordant with my own judgement.

One thing remains to be explained, and I shall then have said all that it becomes me to say concerning these Minor Poems.

It was stated in some of the newspapers that Walter Scott and myself became competitors for the Poet-Laureateship upon the death of Mr. Pye; that we met accidentally at the Prince Regent's levee, each in pursuit of his pretensions, and that some words which were not over-courteous on either side passed between us on the occasion;—to such impudent fabrications will those persons resort who make it their business to pander for public curiosity. The circumstances relating to that appointment have been made known in Mr. Lockhart's *Life* of Sir Walter. His conduct was, as it always was, characteristically generous, and in the highest degree friendly. Indeed, it was neither in his nature nor in mine to place ourselves in competition with any one, or ever to regard a contemporary as a rival. The world was wide enough for us all.

Upon his declining the office, and using his influence, without my knowledge, to obtain it for me, his biographer says,[1] 'Mr. Southey was invited to accept the vacant laurel; and to the honour of the Prince Regent, when he signified that his acceptance must depend on the office being thenceforth so modified as to demand none of the old formal odes, leaving it to the Poet-Laureate to choose his own time for celebrating any great public event that

[1] Vol. iii, p. 88.

might occur, his Royal Highness had the good sense and good taste at once to acquiesce in the propriety of this alteration. The office was thus relieved from the burden of ridicule which had, in spite of so many illustrious names, adhered to it.' The alteration, however, was not brought about exactly in this manner.

I was on the way to London when the correspondence upon this subject between Sir Walter Scott and Mr. Croker took place. A letter from Scott followed me thither, and on my arrival in town I was informed of what had been done. No wish for the Laureateship had passed across my mind, nor had I ever dreamt that it would be proposed to me. My first impulse was to decline it; not from any fear of ridicule, still less of obloquy, but because I had ceased for several years to write occasional verses: the inclination had departed; and though willing as a bee to work from morn till night in collecting honey, I had a great dislike to spinning like a spider. Other considerations overcame this reluctance, and made it my duty to accept the appointment. I then expressed a wish to Mr. Croker that it might be placed upon a footing which would exact from the holder nothing like a schoolboy's task, but leave him at liberty to write when, and in what manner, he thought best, and thus render the office as honourable as it was originally designed to be. Upon this, Mr. Croker, whose friendliness to me upon every occasion I gladly take this opportunity of acknowledging, observed that it was not for us to make terms with the Prince Regent. 'Go you', said he, 'and write your Ode for the New Year. You can never have a better subject than the present state of the war affords you.' He added that some fit time might be found for representing the matter to the Prince in its proper light.

My appointment had no sooner been made known, than I received a note with Sir William Parsons's compliments, requesting that I would let him have the Ode as soon as possible, Mr. Pye having always provided him with it six weeks before the New Year's Day. I was not wanting in punctuality; nevertheless, it was a great trouble to Sir William that the office should have been conferred upon a poet who did not walk in the ways of his predecessor, and do according to all things that he had done; for Mr. Pye had written his odes always in regular stanzas and in rhyme. Poor Sir William, though he had not fallen upon evil tongues and evil times, thought he had fallen upon evil ears when he was to set verses like mine to music.

But the labour which the Chief Musician bestowed upon the verses of the Chief Poet was so much labour lost. The performance of the Annual Odes had been suspended from the time of the King's illness, in 1810. Under the circumstances of his malady, any festal celebration of the birth-day would have been a violation of natural feeling and public propriety. On those occasions it was certain that nothing would be expected from me during the life of George III. But the New Year's performance might perhaps be called for, and for that, therefore, I always prepared. Upon the accession of George IV, I made ready an Ode for St. George's Day, which Mr. Shield, who was much better satisfied with his yokefellow than Sir William had been, thought happily suited for his purpose. It was indeed well suited for us both. All my other Odes related to the circumstances of the passing times, and could have been appropriately performed only when they were composed; but this was a standing subject, and, till this should be called for, it was needless to provide any thing else. The annual performance had, however, by this time fallen completely into disuse; and thus terminated a custom which may truly be said to have been more honoured in the breach than in the observance.

Keswick, Dec. 12, 1837.

PREFACE TO THE FOURTH VOLUME,

CONTAINING 'THALABA THE DESTROYER'

It was said, in the original Preface to *Joan of Arc*, that the Author would not be in England to witness its reception, but that he would attend to liberal criticism, and hope to profit by it in the composition of a poem upon the discovery of America by the Welsh prince Madoc.

That subject I had fixed upon when a schoolboy, and had often conversed upon the probabilities of the story with the schoolfellow to whom, sixteen years afterwards, I had the satisfaction of inscribing the poem. It was commenced at Bath in the autumn of 1794; but, upon putting *Joan of Arc* to the press, its progress was necessarily suspended, and it was not resumed till the second edition of that work had been completed. Then it became my chief occupation during twelve months that I resided in the village of Westbury, near Bristol. This was one of the happiest portions of my life. I never before or since produced so much poetry in the same space of time. The smaller pieces were communicated by letter to Charles Lamb, and had the advantage of his animadversions. I was then also in habits of the most frequent and intimate intercourse with Davy,—then in the flower and freshness of his youth. We were within an easy walk of each other, over some of the most beautiful ground in that beautiful part of England. When I went to the Pneumatic Institution, he had to tell me of some new experiment or discovery, and of the views which it opened for him; and when he came to Westbury there was a fresh portion of *Madoc* for his hearing. Davy encouraged me with his hearty approbation during its progress; and the bag of nitrous oxyde with which he generally regaled me upon my visits to him, was not required for raising my spirits to the degree of settled fair, and keeping them at that elevation.

In November, 1836, I walked to that village with my son, wishing to show him a house endeared to me by so many recollections; but not a vestige of it remained, and local alterations rendered it impossible even to ascertain its site,—which is now included within the grounds of a Nunnery! The bosom friends with whom I associated there have all departed before me; and of the domestic circle in which my happiness was then centered, I am the sole survivor.

When we removed from Westbury at Midsummer, 1799, I had reached the penultimate book of *Madoc*. That poem was finished on the 12th of July following, at Kingsdown, Bristol, in the house of an old lady, whose portrait hangs, with that of my own mother, in the room wherein I am now writing. The son who lived with her was one of my dearest friends, and one of the best men I ever knew or heard of. In those days I was an early riser: the time so gained was usually employed in carrying on the poem which I had in hand; and when Charles Danvers came down to breakfast on the morning after *Madoc* was completed, I had the first hundred lines of *Thalaba* to show him, fresh from the mint.

But this poem was neither crudely conceived nor hastily undertaken. I had fixed upon the ground, four years before, for a Mahommedan tale; and in the course of that time the plan had been formed and the materials collected. It was pursued with unabating ardour at Exeter, in the village of Burton, near Christ Church, and afterwards at Kingsdown, till the ensuing spring, when Dr. Beddoes advised me to go to the south of Europe, on account of my health. For Lisbon, therefore, we set off; and,

hastening to Falmouth, found the packet, in which we wished to sail, detained in harbour by westerly winds. 'Six days we watched the weathercock, and sighed for north-easters. I walked on the beach, caught soldier-crabs, admired the sea-anemonies in their ever-varying shapes of beauty, read *Gebir*, and wrote half a book of *Thalaba*.' This sentence is from a letter written on our arrival at Lisbon; and it is here inserted because the sea-anemonies (which I have never had any other opportunity of observing) were introduced in *Thalaba* soon afterwards; and because, as already stated, I am sensible of having derived great improvement from the frequent perusal of *Gebir* at that time.

Change of circumstances and of climate effected an immediate cure of what proved to be not an organic disease. A week after our landing at Lisbon I resumed my favourite work, and I completed it at Cintra, a year and six days after the day of its commencement.

A fair transcript was sent to England. Mr. Rickman, with whom I had fallen in at Christ Church in 1797, and whose friendship from that time I have ever accounted among the singular advantages and happinesses of my life, negociated for its publication with Messrs. Longman and Rees. It was printed at Bristol by Biggs and Cottle, and the task of correcting the press was undertaken for me by Davy and our common friend Danvers, under whose roof it had been begun.

The copy which was made from the original draught, regularly as the poem proceeded, is still in my possession. The first corrections were made as they occurred in the process of transcribing, at which time the verses were tried upon my own ear, and had the advantage of being seen in a fair and remarkably legible handwriting. In this transcript the dates of time and place were noted, and things which would otherwise have been forgotten have thus been brought to my recollection. Herein also the alterations were inserted which the poem underwent before it was printed. They were very numerous. Much was pruned off, and more was ingrafted. I was not satisfied with the first part of the concluding book; it was therefore crossed out, and something substituted altogether different in design; but this substitution was so far from being fortunate, that it neither pleased my friends in England nor myself. I then made a third attempt, which succeeded to my own satisfaction and to theirs.

I was in Portugal when *Thalaba* was published. Its reception was very different from that with which *Joan of Arc* had been welcomed: in proportion as the poem deserved better it was treated worse. Upon this occasion my name was first coupled with Mr. Wordsworth's. We were then, and for some time afterwards, all but strangers to each other; and certainly there were no two poets in whose productions, the difference not being that between good and bad, less resemblance could be found. But I happened to be residing at Keswick when Mr. Wordsworth and I began to be acquainted; Mr. Coleridge also had resided there; and this was reason enough for classing us together as a school of poets. Accordingly, for more than twenty years from that time, every tyro in criticism who could smatter and sneer, tried his 'prentice hand' upon the Lake Poets; and every young sportsman who carried a popgun in the field of satire, considered them as fair game.

Keswick, Nov. 8, 1837.

PREFACE TO THE FIFTH VOLUME,

CONTAINING 'MADOC'

When *Madoc* was brought to a close in the summer of 1799, Mr. Coleridge advised me to publish it at once, and to defer making any material alterations, if any should suggest themselves, till a second edition. But four years had passed over my head since *Joan of Arc* was sent to the press, and I was not disposed to commit a second imprudence. If the reputation obtained by that poem had confirmed the confidence which I felt in myself, it had also the effect of making me perceive my own deficiencies, and endeavour with all diligence to supply them. I pleased myself with the hope that it would one day be likened to Tasso's *Rinaldo*, and that as the *Jerusalem* had fulfilled the promise of better things whereof that poem was the pledge, so might *Madoc* be regarded in relation to the juvenile work which had preceded it. Thinking that this would probably be the greatest poem I should ever produce, my intention was to bestow upon it all possible care, as indeed I had determined never again to undertake any subject without due preparation. With this view it was my wish, before *Madoc* could be considered as completed, to see more of Wales than I had yet seen. This I had some opportunity of doing in the autumn of 1801, with my old friends and schoolfellows Charles Wynn and Peter Elmsley. And so much was I bent upon making myself better acquainted with Welsh scenery, manners, and traditions, than could be done by books alone, that if I had succeeded in obtaining a house in the Vale of Neath, for which I was in treaty the year following, it would never have been my fortune to be classed among the Lake Poets.

Little had been done in revising the poem till the first year of my abode at Keswick: there, in the latter end of 1803, it was resumed, and twelve months were diligently employed in reconstructing it. The alterations were more material than those which had been made in *Joan of Arc*, and much more extensive. In its original form the poem consisted of fifteen books, containing about six thousand lines. It was now divided into two parts, and enlarged in the proportion of a full third. Shorter divisions than the usual one of books, or cantos, were found more convenient; the six books therefore, which the first part comprised, were distributed in seventeen sections, and the other nine in twenty-seven. These changes in the form of the work were neither capriciously made, nor for the sake of novelty. The story consisted of two parts, almost as distinct as the *Iliad* and *Odyssey*; and the subdivisions were in like manner indicated by the subject. The alterations in the conduct of the piece occasioned its increase of length.

When Matthew Lewis published the *Castle Spectre*, he gave as his reason for introducing negro guards in a drama which was laid in feudal times, that he thought their appearance would produce a good effect; and if the effect would have been better by making them blue instead of black, blue, said he, they should have been. He was not more bent upon pleasing the public by stage effect, (which no dramatist ever studied more successfully,) than I was upon following my own sense of propriety, and thereby obtaining the approbation of that fit audience, which, being contented that it should be few, I was sure to find. Mr. Sotheby, whose *Saul* was published about the same time as *Madoc*, said to me a year or two afterwards, 'You and I, Sir, find that blank verse will not do in these days; we must stand upon another tack.' Mr. Sotheby

considered the decision of the Pie-Poudre Court as final. But my suit was in that Court of Record which sooner or later pronounces unerringly upon the merits of the case.

Madoc was immediately reprinted in America in numbers, making two octavo volumes. About nine years afterwards there appeared a paper in the *Quarterly Review*, which gave great offence to the Americans; if I am not mistaken in my recollections, it was the first in that journal which had any such tendency. An American author, whose name I heard, but had no wish to remember, supposed it to have been written by me; and upon this gratuitous supposition, (in which, moreover, he happened to be totally mistaken,) he attacked me in a pamphlet, which he had the courtesy to send me, and which I have preserved among my Curiosities of Literature. It is noticed in this place, because, among other vituperative accusations, the pamphleteer denounced the author of *Madoc* as having 'meditated a most serious injury against the reputation of the New World, by attributing its discovery and colonization to a little vagabond Welsh Prince'. This, he said, 'being a most insidious attempt against the honour of America and the reputation of Columbus.' [1]

This poem was the means of making me personally acquainted with Miss Seward. Her encomiastic opinion of it was communicated to me through Charles Lloyd, in a way which required some courteous acknowledgement; this led to an interchange of letters, and an invitation to Lichfield, where, accordingly, I paid her a visit, when next on my way to London, in 1807. She resided in the Bishop's palace. I was ushered up the broad brown stair-case by her cousin, the Reverend Henry White, then one of the minor canons of that cathedral, a remarkable person, who introduced me into the presence with jubilant but appalling solemnity. Miss Seward was seated at her desk. She had just finished some verses to be 'inscribed on the blank leaves of the poem *Madoc*', and the first greeting was no sooner past, than she requested that I would permit her to read them to me. It was a mercy that she did not ask me to read them aloud. But she read admirably herself. The situation, however, in which I found myself, was so ridiculous, and I was so apprehensive of catching the eye of one person in the room, who was equally afraid of meeting mine, that I never felt it more difficult to control my emotions, than while listening, or seeming to listen, to my own praise and glory. But, bending my head as if in a posture of attentiveness, and screening my face with my hand, and occasionally using some force to compress the risible muscles, I got through the scene without any misbehaviour, and expressed my thanks, if not in terms of such glowing admiration as she was accustomed to receive from others, and had bestowed upon my unworthy self, yet as well as I could. I passed two days under her roof, and corresponded with her from that time till her death.

Miss Seward had been crippled by having repeatedly injured one of her knee-pans. Time had taken away her bloom and her beauty, but her fine countenance retained its animation, and her eyes could not have been brighter nor more expressive in her youth. Sir Walter Scott says of them, 'they were auburn, of the precise shade and hue of her hair. In reciting, or in speaking with animation, they appeared to become darker, and as it were to flash fire. I should have hesitated,' he adds, 'to state the impression which this peculiarity made upon me at the time, had not my observation been confirmed by that of the first actress on this or any other stage, with whom I lately hap-

[1] The title of this notable pamphlet is, 'The United States and England; being a Reply to the Criticism on Inchiquin's Letters, contained in the *Quarterly Review* for January 1814. New York: published by A. H. Inskeep; and Bradford and Inskeep, Philadelphia. Van Winkle and Wiley, Printers, 1815.'

pened to converse on our deceased friend's expressive powers of countenance.' [1] Sir Walter has not observed that this peculiarity was hereditary. Describing, in one of her earlier letters, a scene with her mother, she says, 'I grew so saucy to her, that she looked grave, and took her pinch of snuff, first at one nostril, and then at the other, with swift and angry energy, and her eyes began to grow dark and to flash. 'Tis an odd peculiarity: but the balls of my mother's eyes change from brown into black, when she feels either indignation or bodily pain.' [2]

Miss Seward was not so much overrated at one time, as she has since been unduly depreciated. She was so considerable a person when her reputation was at its height, that Washington said no circumstance in his life had been so mortifying to him as that of having been made the subject of her invective in her Monody on Major André. After peace had been concluded between Great Britain and the United States, he commissioned an American officer, who was about to sail for England, to call upon her at Lichfield, and explain to her, that instead of having caused André's death, he had endeavoured to save him; and she was requested to peruse the papers in proof of this, which he sent for her perusal. 'They filled me with contrition', says Miss Seward, 'for the rash injustice of my censure.' [3]

An officer of her name served as lieutenant in the garrison at Gibraltar during the siege. To his great surprise, . . . for he had no introduction which could lead him to expect the honour of such notice, . . . he received an invitation to dine with General Elliot. The General asked him if he were related to the author of the Monody on Major André. The Lieutenant replied that he had the honour of being very distantly related to her, but he had not the happiness of her acquaintance. 'It is sufficient, Mr. Seward,' said the General, 'that you bear her name, and a fair reputation, to entitle you to the notice of every soldier who has it in his power to serve and oblige a military brother. You will always find a cover for you at my table, and a sincere welcome; and whenever it may be in my power to serve you essentially, I shall not want the inclination.' [4]

These anecdotes show the estimation in which she was, not undeservedly, held. Her epistolary style was distorted and disfigured by her admiration of Johnson; and in her poetry she set, rather than followed, the brocade fashion of Dr. Darwin. Still there are unquestionable proofs of extraordinary talents and great ability both in her letters and her poems. She was an exemplary daughter, a most affectionate and faithful friend. Sir Walter has estimated, with characteristic skill, her powers of criticism, and her strong prepossessions upon literary points. And believing that the more she was known, the more she would have been esteemed and admired, I bear a willing testimony to her accomplishments and her genius, to her generous disposition, her frankness, and her sincerity and warmth of heart.

Keswick, Feb. 19, 1838.

[1] Biographical Preface to the *Poetical Works of Anna Seward*, p. xxiii.
[2] *Literary Correspondence.* Ib., p. cxxi.
[3] *Letters of Anna Seward*, vol. v, p. 143.
[4] *Letters of Anna Seward*, vol. i, p. 298.

PREFACE TO THE SIXTH VOLUME,

BEING THE FIRST OF 'BALLADS AND METRICAL TALES'

Most of the pieces in this volume were written in early life, a few are comparatively of recent date, and there are some of them which lay unfinished for nearly thirty years.

Upon reading, on their first appearance, certain of these Ballads, and of the lighter pieces now comprised in the third volume of this collective edition, Mr. Edgeworth said to me, 'Take my word for it, Sir, the bent of your genius is for comedy.' I was as little displeased with the intended compliment as one of the most distinguished poets of this age was with Mr. Sheridan, who, upon returning a play which he had offered for acceptance at Drury Lane, told him it was a comical tragedy.

My late friend, Mr. William Taylor of Norwich, whom none who knew him intimately can ever call to mind without affection and regret, has this passage in his *Life of Dr. Sayers*:—'Not long after this (the year 1800), Mr. Robert Southey visited Norwich, was introduced to Dr. Sayers, and partook those feelings of complacent admiration which his presence was adapted to inspire.—Dr. Sayers pointed out to us in conversation, as adapted for the theme of a ballad, a story related by Olaus Magnus of a witch, whose coffin was confined by three chains, sprinkled with holy water; but who was, nevertheless, carried off by demons. Already, I believe, Dr. Sayers had made a ballad on the subject, so did I, and so did Mr. Southey; but after seeing the *Old Woman of Berkeley*, we agreed in awarding to it the preference. Still, the very different manner in which each had employed the same basis of narration might render welcome the opportunity of comparison; but I have not found among the papers of Dr. Sayers a copy of his poem.'

There is a mistake here as to the date. This, my first visit to Norwich, was in the spring of 1798; and I had so much to interest me there in the society of my kind host and friend, Mr. William Taylor, that the mention at Dr. Sayers's table of the story in Olaus Magnus made no impression on me at the time, and was presently forgotten. Indeed, if I had known that either he or his friend had written or intended to write a ballad upon the subject, that knowledge, however much the story might have pleased me, would have withheld me from all thought of versifying it. In the autumn of the same year, I passed some days at Hereford with Mr. William Bowyer Thomas, one of the friends with whom, in 1796, I had visited the Arrabida Convent near Setubal. By his means I obtained permission to make use of the books in the Cathedral Library, and accordingly I was locked up for several mornings in that part of the Cathedral where the books were kept in chains. So little were these books used at that time, that in placing them upon the shelves, no regard had been had to the length of the chains; and when the volume which I wished to consult was fastened to one of the upper shelves by a short chain, the only means by which it was possible to make use of it was, by piling upon the reading desk as many volumes with longer chains as would reach up to the length of its tether; then, by standing on a chair, I was able to effect my purpose. There, and thus, I first read the story of the Old Woman of Berkeley, in Matthew of Westminster, and transcribed it into a pocket-book. I had no recollection of what had passed at Dr. Sayers's; but the circumstantial details in the monkish Chronicle impressed me so strongly, that I began to versify them that very evening. It was the

last day of our pleasant visit at Hereford; and on the following morning the remainder of the Ballad was pencilled in a post-chaise on our way to Abberley.

Mr. Wathen, a singular and obliging person, who afterwards made a voyage to the East Indies, and published an account of what he saw there, traced for me a facsimile of a wooden cut in the *Nuremberg Chronicle* (which was among the prisoners in the Cathedral). It represents the Old Woman's forcible abduction from her intended place of burial. This was put into the hands of a Bristol artist; and the engraving in wood which he made from it was prefixed to the Ballad when first published, in the second volume of my poems, 1799. The Devil alludes to it in his Walk, when he complains of a certain poet as having 'put him in ugly ballads with libellous pictures for sale'.

The passage from Matthew of Westminster was prefixed to the Ballad when first published, and it has continued to be so in every subsequent edition of my minor poems from that time to the present: for whenever I have founded either a poem, or part of one, upon any legend, or portion of history, I have either extracted the passage to which I was indebted, if its length allowed, or have referred to it. Mr. Payne Collier, however, after the Ballad, with its parentage affixed, had been twenty years before the public, discovered that I had copied the story from Heywood's *Nine Books of various History concerning Women*, and that I had not thought proper to acknowledge the obligation. The discovery is thus stated in that gentleman's *Poetical Decameron* (vol. i, p. 323). Speaking of the book, one of his Interlocutors says, 'It is not of such rarity or singularity as to deserve particular notice now; only if you refer to p. 443, you will find the story on which Mr. Southey founded his mock-ballad of the *Old Woman of Berkeley*. You will see, too, that the mode in which it is told is extremely similar.

'Morton. Had Mr. Southey seen Heywood's book?

'Bourne. It is not improbable; or some quotation from it, the resemblance is so exact: you may judge from the few following sentences.'

Part of Heywood's narration is then given; upon which one of the speakers observes, 'The resemblance is exact, and it is not unlikely that Heywood and Southey copied from the same original.

'Bourne. Perhaps so: Heywood quotes Guillerimus, *in Special. Histor.* lib. xxvi. c. 26. He afterwards relates, as Southey, that the Devil placed the Old Woman of Berkeley before him on a black horse, and that her screams were heard four miles off.'

It cannot, however, be disputed, that Mr. Payne Collier has made one discovery relating to this subject; for he has discovered that the *Old Woman of Berkeley* is a mock-ballad. Certainly this was never suspected by the Author, or any of his friends. It obtained a very different character in Russia, where having been translated and published, it was prohibited for this singular reason, that children were said to be frightened by it. This I was told by a Russian traveller who called upon me at Keswick.

Keswick, March 8, 1838.

ADVERTISEMENT TO THE SEVENTH VOLUME,

OR SECOND OF 'BALLADS AND METRICAL TALES'

THE two volumes of this collection which consist of Ballads and Metrical Tales contain the Author's earliest and latest productions of that kind: those which were written with most facility and most glee, and those upon which most time and pains were bestowed, according to the subject and the mode of treating it.

The *Tale of Paraguay* was published separately in 1825, having been so long in hand that the Dedication was written many years before the Poem was completed.

All for Love, and *The Legend of a Cock and a Hen*, were published together in a little volume in 1829.

PREFACE TO THE EIGHTH VOLUME,

CONTAINING 'THE CURSE OF KEHAMA'

SEVERAL years ago, in the Introduction of my 'Letters to Mr. Charles Butler, vindicating the Book of the Church', I had occasion to state that, while a school-boy at Westminster, I had formed an intention of exhibiting the most remarkable forms of Mythology which have at any time obtained among mankind, by making each the ground-work of a narrative poem. The performance, as might be expected, fell far short of the design, and yet it proved something more than a dream of juvenile ambition.

I began with the Mahommedan religion, as being that with which I was then best acquainted myself, and of which every one who had read the *Arabian Nights' Entertainments* possessed all the knowledge necessary for readily understanding and entering into the intent and spirit of the poem. Mr. Wilberforce thought that I had conveyed in it a very false impression of that religion, and that the moral sublimity which he admired in it was owing to this flattering misrepresentation. But *Thalaba the Destroyer* was professedly an Arabian Tale. The design required that I should bring into view the best features of that system of belief and worship which had been developed under the Covenant with Ishmael, placing in the most favourable light the morality of the Koran, and what the least corrupted of the Mahommedans retain of the patriarchal faith. It would have been altogether incongruous to have touched upon the abominations engrafted upon it; first by the false Prophet himself, who appears to have been far more remarkable for audacious profligacy than for any intellectual endowments, and afterwards by the spirit of Oriental despotism which accompanied Mahommedanism wherever it was established.

Heathen Mythologies have generally been represented by Christian poets as the work of the Devil and his Angels; and the machinery derived from them was thus rendered credible, according to what was during many ages a received opinion. The plan upon which I proceeded in *Madoc* was to produce the effect of machinery as far as was consistent with the character of the poem, by representing the most remarkable religion of the New World such as it was, a system of atrocious priestcraft. It was not here as in *Thalaba* the foundation of the poem, but, as usual in what

are called epic poems, only incidentally connected with it.

When I took up, for my next subject, that mythology which Sir William Jones had been the first to introduce into English poetry, I soon perceived that the best mode of treating it would be to construct a story altogether mythological. In what form to compose it was then to be determined. No such question had arisen concerning any of my former poems. I should never for a moment have thought of any other measure than blank verse for *Joan of Arc*, and for *Madoc*, and afterwards for *Roderick*. The reason why the irregular rhymeless lyrics of Dr. Sayers were preferred for *Thalaba* was, that the freedom and variety of such verse were suited to the story. Indeed, of all the laudatory criticisms with which I have been favoured during a long literary life, none ever gratified me more than that of Henry Kirke White upon this occasion, when he observed, that if any other known measure had been adopted, the poem would have been deprived of half its beauty, and all its propriety. And when he added, that the author never seemed to inquire how other men would treat a subject, or what might be the fashion of the times, but took that course which his own sense of fitness pointed out, I could not have desired more appropriate commendation.

The same sense of fitness which made me choose for an Arabian tale the simplest and easiest form of verse, induced me to take a different course in an Indian poem. It appeared to me, that here neither the tone of morals, nor the strain of poetry, could be pitched too high; that nothing but moral sublimity could compensate for the extravagance of the fictions, and that all the skill I might possess in the art of poetry was required to counterbalance the disadvantage of a mythology with which few readers were likely to be well acquainted, and which would appear monstrous if its deformities were not kept out of sight. I endeavoured, therefore, to combine the utmost richness of versification with the greatest freedom. The spirit of the poem was Indian, but there was nothing Oriental in the style. I had learnt the language of poetry from our own great masters and the great poets of antiquity.

No poem could have been more deliberately planned, nor more carefully composed. It was commenced at Lisbon on the first of May, 1801, and recommenced in the summer of the same year at Kingsdown, in the same house (endeared to me by many once delightful but now mournful recollections) in which *Madoc* had been finished, and *Thalaba* begun. A little was added during the winter of that year in London. It was resumed at Kingsdown in the summer of 1802, and then laid aside till 1806, during which interval *Madoc* was reconstructed and published. Resuming it then once more, all that had been written was recast at Keswick: there I proceeded with it leisurely, and finished it on the 25th of November, 1809. It is the only one of my long poems of which detached parts were written to be afterwards inserted in their proper places. Were I to name the persons to whom it was communicated during its progress, it would be admitted now that I might well be encouraged by their approbation; and indeed, when it was published, I must have been very unreasonable if I had not been satisfied with its reception.

It was not till the present edition of these Poems was in the press, that, eight-and-twenty years after *Kehama* had been published, I first saw the article upon it in the *Monthly Review*, parts of which cannot be more appropriately preserved any where than here; it shows the determination with which the Reviewer entered upon his task, and the importance which he attached to it.

'Throughout our literary career we cannot recollect a more favourable opportunity than the present for a full discharge of our critical duty. We are indeed bound now to make a firm stand for the purity of our poetic taste against

this last and most desperate assault, conducted as it is by a writer of considerable reputation, and unquestionably of considerable abilities. If this poem were to be tolerated, all things after it may demand impunity, and it will be in vain to contend hereafter for any one established rule of poetry as to design and subject, as to character and incident, as to language and versification. We may return at once to the rude hymn in honour of Bacchus, and indite strains adapted to the recitation of rustics in the season of vintage :—

" Quae canerent agerentque peruncti faecibus ora."

It shall be our plan to establish these points, we hope, beyond reasonable controversy, by a complete analysis of the twenty-four sections (as they may truly be called) of the portentous work, and by ample quotations interspersed with remarks, in which we shall endeavour to withhold no praise that can fairly be claimed, and no censure that is obviously deserved.'

The reviewer fulfilled his promises, however much he failed in his object. He was not more liberal of censure than of praise, and he was not sparing of quotations. The analysis was sufficiently complete for the purposes of criticism, except that the critic did not always give himself the trouble to understand what he was determined to ridicule. 'It is necessary for us,' he said, 'according to our purpose of deterring future writers from the choice of such a story, or from such a management of that story, to detail the gross follies of the work in question; and tedious as the operation may be, we trust that in the judgement of all those lovers of literature who duly value the preservation of sound principles of composition among us, the end will excuse the means.' The means were ridicule and reprobation, and the end at which he aimed was thus stated in the Reviewer's peroration.

'We know not that Mr. Southey's most devoted admirers can complain of our having omitted a single incident essential to the display of his character or the developement of his plot. To other readers we should apologize for our prolixity, were we not desirous, as we hinted before, of giving a death-blow to the gross extravagancies of the author's school of poetry, if we cannot hope to reform so great an offender as himself. In general, all that nature and all that art has lavished on him is rendered useless by his obstinate adherence to his own system of fancied originality, in which every thing that is good is old, and every thing that is new is good for nothing. Convinced as we are that many of the author's faults proceed from mere idleness, deserving even less indulgence than the erroneous principles of his poetical system, we shall conclude by a general exhortation to all critics to condemn, and to all writers to avoid the example of combined carelessness and perversity which is here afforded by Mr. Southey; and we shall mark this last and worst eccentricity of his Muse with the following character: —Here is the composition of a poet not more distinguished by his genius and knowledge, than by his contempt for public opinion, and the utter depravity of his taste,—a depravity which is incorrigible, and, we are sorry to add, most unblushingly rejoicing in its own hopelessness of amendment.'

The *Monthly Review* has, I believe, been for some years defunct. I never knew to whom I was beholden for the good service rendered me in that Journal, when such assistance was of most value; nor by whom I was subsequently, during several years, favoured in the same Journal with such flagrant civilities as those of which the reader has here seen a sample.

Keswick, May 19, 1838.

PREFACE TO THE NINTH VOLUME,

CONTAINING 'RODERICK, THE LAST OF THE GOTHS'.

THIS poem was commenced at Keswick, Dec. 2, 1809, and finished there July 14, 1814.

A French translation, by M. B. de S., in three volumes 12mo., was published in 1820, and another by M. le Chevalier * * *, in one volume 8vo, 1821. Both are in prose.

When the latest of these versions was nearly ready for publication, the publisher, who was also the printer, insisted upon having a life of the author prefixed. The French public, he said, knew nothing of M. Southey, and in order to make the book sell, it must be managed to interest them for the writer. The Chevalier represented as a conclusive reason for not attempting any thing of the kind, that he was not acquainted with M. Southey's private history. 'Would you believe it?' says a friend of the translator's, from whose letter I transcribe what follows; 'this was his answer verbatim: *N'importe, écrivez toujours; brodez, brodez-la un peu; que ce soit vrai ou non ce ne fait rien; qui prendra la peine de s'informer?*' Accordingly a *Notice sur M. Southey* was composed, not exactly in conformity with the publisher's notions of biography, but from such materials as could be collected from magazines and other equally unauthentic sources.

In one of these versions a notable mistake occurs, occasioned by the French pronunciation of an English word. The whole passage indeed, in both versions, may be regarded as curiously exemplifying the difference between French and English poetry.

'The lamps and tapers now grew pale,
And through the eastern windows slanting fell
The roseate ray of morn. Within those walls
Returning day restored no cheerful sounds
Or joyous motions of awakening life;
But in the stream of light the speckled motes,
As if in mimicry of insect play,
Floated with mazy movement. Sloping down
Over the altar pass'd the pillar'd beam,
And rested on the sinful woman's grave
As if it enter'd there, a light from Heaven.
So be it! cried Pelayo, even so!
As in a momentary interval,
When thought expelling thought, had left his mind
Open and passive to the influxes
Of outward sense, his vacant eye was there, . .
So be it, Heavenly Father, even so!
Thus may thy vivifying goodness shed
Forgiveness there; for let not thou the groans
Of dying penitence, nor my bitter prayers
Before thy mercy-seat, be heard in vain!
And thou, poor soul, who from the dolorous house
Of weeping and of pain, dost look to me
To shorten and assuage thy penal term,
Pardon me that these hours in other thoughts
And other duties than this garb, this night
Enjoin, should thus have pass'd! Our mother-land
Exacted of my heart the sacrifice;
And many a vigil must thy son perform
Henceforth in woods and mountain fastnesses,
And tented fields, outwatching for her sake
The starry host, and ready for the work
Of day, before the sun begins his course.'[1]

[1] See *Roderick*, VIII, lines 101–33.

Il se livrait à toutes ces reflexions quand la lumière des lampes et des cierges commença à pâlir, et que les premières teintes de l'aurore se montrèrent à travers les hautes croisées tournées vers l'orient. Le retour du jour ne ramena point dans ces murs des sons joyeux ni les mouvemens de la vie qui se réveille ; les seuls papillons de nuit, agitant leurs ailes pesantes, bourdonnaient encore sous les voûtes ténébreuses. Bientôt le premier rayon du soleil, glissant obliquement par-dessus l'autel, vint s'arrêter sur la tombe de la femme pécheresse, et la lumière du ciel sembla y pénétrer. 'Que ce présage s'accomplisse,' s'écria Pelage, qui, absorbé dans ses méditations, fixait en ce moment ses yeux sur le tombeau de sa mère ; 'Dieu de miséricorde, qu'il en soit ainsi ! Puisse ta bonté vivifiante y verser de même le pardon ! Que les sanglots de la pénitence expirante, et que mes prières amères ne montent point en vain devant le trône éternel. Et toi, pauvre âme, qui de ton séjour douloureux de souffrances et de larmes espères en moi pour abréger et adoucir ton supplice temporaire, pardonne-moi d'avoir, sous ces habits et dans cette nuit, détourné mes pensées sur d'autres devoirs. Notre patrie commune a exigé de moi ce sacrifice, et ton fils doit dorénavant accomplir plus d'une veille dans la profondeur des forêts, sur la cime des monts, dans les plaines couvertes de tentes, observant, pour l'amour de l'Espagne, la marche des astres de la nuit, et préparant l'ouvrage de sa journée avant que le soleil ne commence sa course.'—T. i, pp. 175–177.

In the other translation the *motes* are not converted into moths,—but the image is omitted.

Consumées dans des soins pareils les rapides heures s'écouloient, les lampes et les torches commençoient à pâlir, et l'oblique rayon du matin doroit déjà les vitraux élevés qui regardoient vers l'Orient : le retour du jour ne ramenoit point, dans cette sombre enceinte, les sons joyeux, ni le tableau mouvant de la vie qui se réveille ; mais, tombant d'en haut, le céleste rayon, passant au-dessus de l'autel, vint frapper le tombeau de la femme pécheresse. 'Ainsi soit-il,' s'écria Pelage, 'ainsi soit-il, ô divin Créateur ! Puisse ta vivifiante bonté verser ainsi le pardon en ce lieu ! Que les gémissemens d'une mort pénitente, que mes amères prières ne soient pas arrivées en vain devant le trône de miséricorde ! Et toi, qui, de ton séjour de souffrances et de larmes, regardes vers ton fils, pour abréger et soulager tes peines, pardonne, si d'autres devoirs ont rempli les heures que cette nuit et cet habit m'enjoignoient de te consacrer ! Notre patrie exigeoit ce sacrifice ; d'autres vigiles m'attendent dans les bois et les défilés de nos montagnes ; et bientôt sous la tente, il me faudra veiller, le soir, avant que le ciel ne se couvre d'étoiles, être prêt pour le travail du jour, avant que le soleil ne commence sa course.'—pp. 92, 93.

A very good translation in Dutch verse was published in two volumes, 8vo, 1823–4, with this title :—'Rodrigo de Goth, Koning van Spanje. Naar het Engelsch van Southey gevolgd, door Vrouwe Katharina Wilhelmina Bilderdijk. Te 's Gravenhage.' It was sent to me with the following epistle from her husband Mr. Willem Bilderdijk.

'Roberto Southey, viro spectatissimo, Gulielmus Bilderdijk, S. P. D.

'Etsi ea nunc temporis passim invaluerit opinio, poetarum genus quam maxima gloriae cupiditate flagrare, mihi tamen contraria semper insedit persuasio, qui divinae Poëseos altitudinem veramque laudem non nisi ab iis cognosci putavi quorum prae caeteris e meliori luto finxerit praecordia Titan, neque aut verè aut justè judicari vatem nisi ab iis qui eodem afflatu moveantur. Sexagesimus autem jam agitur annus ex quo et ipse meos inter aequales poëta salutor, eumque locum quem ineunte adolescentia occupare contigit, in hunc usque diem tenuisse videor, popularis aurae nunquam captator, quin immo perpetuus contemptor ; parcus ipse laudator, censor gravis et nonnunquam molestus. Tuum vero nomen, Vir celeberrime ac spectatissime, jam antea veneratus, perlecto tuo de Roderico rege poëmate, non potui non summis extollere laudibus,

quo doctissimo simul ac venustissimo opere, si minus *divinam Aeneida*, saltem immortalem Tassonis Epopeiam *tentasse*, quin et certo respectu ita superasse videris, ut majorum perpaucos, aequalium neminem, cum vera fide ac pietate in Deum, tum ingenio omnique poëtica dote tibi comparandum existimem. Ne mireris itaque, carminis tui gravitate ac dulcedine captam, meoque judicio fultam non illaudatam in nostratibus Musam tuum illud nobile poema foeminea manu sed insueto labore attrectasse, Belgicoque sermone reddidisse. Hanc certe, per quadrantem seculi et quod excurrit felicissimo connubio mihi junctam, meamque in Divina arte alumnam ac sociam, nimium in eo sibi sumpsisse nemo facile arbitrabitur cui vel minimum Poëseos nostrae sensum usurpare contigerit; nec ego hos ejus conatus quos illustri tuo nomini dicandos putavit, tibi mea manu offerre dubitabam. Haec itaque utriusque nostrum in te observantiae specimina accipe, Vir illustrissime, ac si quod communium studiorum, si quod verae pietatis est vinculum, nos tibi ex animo habe addictissimos. Vale.

'Dabam Lugduni in Batavis. Ipsis idib. Februar. CIↃIↃCCCXXIV.'

I went to Leyden, in 1825, for the purpose of seeing the writer of this epistle and the lady who had translated my poem, and addressed it to me in some very affecting stanzas. It so happened, that on my arrival in that city, I was laid up under a surgeon's care; they took me into their house, and made the days of my confinement as pleasurable as they were memorable. I have never been acquainted with a man of higher intellectual power, nor of greater learning, nor of more various and extensive knowledge than Bilderdijk, confessedly the most distinguished man of letters in his own country. His wife was worthy of him. I paid them another visit the following year. They are now both gone to their rest, and I shall not look upon their like again.

Soon after the publication of *Roderick*, I received the following curious letter from the Ettrick Shepherd, (who had passed a few days with me in the preceding autumn,) giving me an account of his endeavours to procure a favourable notice of the poem in the *Edinburgh Review*.

. Edinburgh, Dec. 15, 1814.

'My dear Sir,

'I was very happy at seeing the postmark of Keswick, and quite proud of the pleasure you make me believe my *Wake* has given to the beauteous and happy group at Greta Hall. Indeed few things could give me more pleasure, for I left my heart a sojourner among them. I have had a higher opinion of matrimony since that period than ever I had before, and I desire that you will positively give my kindest respects to each of them individually.

'The *Pilgrim of the Sun* is published, as you will see by the Papers, and if I may believe some communications that I have got, the public opinion of it is high; but these communications to an author are not to be depended on.

'I have read *Roderick* over and over again, and am the more and more convinced that it is the noblest epic poem of the age. I have had some correspondence and a good deal of conversation with Mr. Jeffrey about it, though he does not agree with me in every particular. He says it is too long, and wants *elasticity*, and will not, he fears, be generally read, though much may be said in its favour. I had even teazed him to let me review it for him, on account, as I said, that he could not appreciate its merits. I copy one sentence out of the letter he sent in answer to mine:—

'"For Southey I have, as well as you, great respect, and when he will let me, great admiration; but he is a most provoking fellow, and at least as conceited as his neighbour Wordsworth. I cannot just trust you with his *Roderick*; but I shall be extremely happy to talk over

that and other kindred subjects with you, for I am every way disposed to give Southey a lavish allowance of praise, and few things would give me greater pleasure than to find he had afforded me a fair opportunity. But I must do my duty according to my own apprehensions of it."

'I supped with him last night, but there was so many people that I got but little conversation with him, but what we had was solely about you and Wordsworth. I suppose you have heard what a crushing review he has given the latter. I still found him persisting in his first asseveration, that it was heavy; but what was my pleasure to find that he had only got to the seventeenth division. I assured him he had the marrow of the thing to come at as yet, and in that I was joined by Mr. Alison. There was at the same time a Lady M—— joined us at the instant; short as her remark was, it seemed to make more impression on Jeffrey than all our arguments:—"Oh, I do love Southey!" that was all.

Keswick, June 15, 1838.

'I have no room to tell you more. But I beg that you will not do any thing, nor publish any thing that will nettle Jeffrey for the present, knowing as you do how omnipotent he is with the fashionable world, and seemingly so well disposed toward you.

'I am ever your's most truly,

'JAMES HOGG.

'I wish the Notes may be safe enough. I never looked at them. I wish these large quartos were all in hell burning.'

The reader will be as much amused as I was with poor Hogg's earnest desire that I would not say any thing which might tend to frustrate his friendly intentions.

> But what success the Shepherd met
> Is to the world a secret yet.

There can be no reason, however, for withholding what was said in my reply of the *crushing* review which had been given to Mr. Wordsworth's poem:—'*He* crush the *Excursion*!! Tell him he might as easily crush Skiddaw!'

THALABA THE DESTROYER

Ποιημάτων ἀκρατὴς ἡ ἐλευθερία, καὶ νόμος εἷς, τὸ δόξαν τῷ ποιητῇ.
LUCIAN, *Quomodo Hist. Scribenda.*

PREFACE TO THE FIRST EDITION

IN the continuation of the *Arabian Tales*, the Domdaniel is mentioned; a seminary for evil magicians, under the roots of the sea. From this seed the present romance has grown. Let me not be supposed to prefer the rhythm in which it is written, abstractedly considered, to the regular blank verse; the noblest measure, in my judgement, of which our admirable language is capable. For the following Poem I have preferred it, because it suits the varied subject: it is the *Arabesque* ornament of an Arabian tale.

The dramatic sketches of Dr. Sayers, a volume which no lover of poetry will recollect without pleasure, induced me, when a young versifier, to practise in this rhythm. I felt that while it gave the poet a wider range of expression, it satisfied the ear of the reader. It were easy to make a parade of learning, by enumerating the various feet which it admits: it is only needful to observe that no two lines are employed in *sequence* which can be read into one. Two six-syllable lines, it will perhaps be answered, compose an Alexandrine: the truth is, that the Alexandrine, when harmonious, is composed of two six-syllable lines.

One advantage this metre assuredly possesses,—the dullest reader cannot distort it into discord: he may read it prosaically, but its flow and fall will still be perceptible. Verse is not enough favoured by the English reader: perhaps this is owing to the obtrusiveness, the regular Jew's harp *twing-twang*, of what has been foolishly called heroic measure. I do not wish the *improvisatorè* tune;—but something that denotes the sense of harmony, something like the accent of feeling,—like the tone which every poet necessarily gives to poetry.

Cintra, October, 1800.

THALABA THE DESTROYER

THE FIRST BOOK

. . Worse and worse, young Orphane, be thy payne,
If thou due vengeance doe forbeare,
Till guiltie blood her guerdon do obtayne.
Faery Queen, B. ii. Can. I.

1

How beautiful is night!
A dewy freshness fills the silent air;
No mist obscures, nor cloud, nor speck, nor stain,
Breaks the serene of heaven;
In full-orb'd glory yonder Moon divine
Rolls through the dark blue depths.
Beneath her steady ray
The desert-circle spreads,
Like the round ocean, girdled with the sky.
How beautiful is night! 10

2

Who at this untimely hour
Wanders o'er the desert sands?
No station is in view,
Nor palm-grove, islanded amid the waste.
The mother and her child, [boy,
The widow'd mother and the fatherless
They at this untimely hour
Wander o'er the desert sands.

3

Alas! the setting sun
Saw Zeinab in her bliss,
Hodeirah's wife beloved.
Alas! the wife beloved,
The fruitful mother late,
Whom when the daughters of Arabia named,
They wish'd their lot like hers,
She wanders o'er the desert sands
A wretched widow now;
The fruitful mother of so fair a race,
With only one preserved,
She wanders o'er the wilderness.

4

No tear relieved the burthen of her heart;
Stunn'd with the heavy woe, she felt like one [blood.
Half-waken'd from a midnight dream of
But sometimes when the boy
Would wet her hand with tears,
And, looking up to her fix'd countenance,
Sob out the name of Mother! then she groan'd. [eyes
At length collecting, Zeinab turn'd her
To heaven, and praised the Lord;
'He gave, he takes away!'
The pious sufferer cried,
'The Lord our God is good!'

5

'Good is He!' quoth the boy:
'Why are my brethren and my sisters slain?
Why is my father kill'd?
Did ever we neglect our prayers,
Or ever lift a hand unclean to Heaven?
Did ever stranger from our tent
Unwelcomed turn away?
Mother, He is not good!'

6

Then Zeinab beat her breast in agony,
'O God, forgive the child!
He knows not what he says;
Thou know'st I did not teach him thoughts like these;
O Prophet, pardon him!'

7

She had not wept till that assuaging prayer, . . [then,
The fountains of her grief were open'd
And tears relieved her heart.
She raised her swimming eyes to Heaven,
'Allah, thy will be done!
Beneath the dispensations of that will
I groan, but murmur not.
A day will come, when all things that are dark
Will be made clear; . . then shall I know,
O Lord!
Why in thy mercy thou hast stricken me;
Then see and understand what now
My heart believes and feels.'

8

Young Thalaba in silence heard reproof;
His brow in manly frowns was knit,
With manly thoughts his heart was full.
'Tell me who slew my father?' cried the boy.
Zeinab replied and said, . [foe.
'I knew not that there lived thy father's
The blessings of the poor for him
Went daily up to Heaven;
In distant lands the traveller told his praise; . .
I did not think there lived
Hodeirah's enemy.'

9

'But I will hunt him through the world!'
Young Thalaba exclaim'd.
'Already I can bend my father's bow;
Soon will my arm have strength
To drive the arrow-feathers to his heart.'

10

Zeinab replied, 'O Thalaba, my child,
Thou lookest on to distant days,
And we are in the desert, far from men!

11

Not till that moment her afflicted heart
Had leisure for the thought.
She cast her eyes around,
Alas! no tents were there
Beside the bending sands,
No palm-tree rose to spot the wilderness;
The dark blue sky closed round,
And rested like a dome
Upon the circling waste.
She cast her eyes around,
Famine and Thirst were there;
And then the wretched Mother bow'd her head,
And wept upon her child.

12

A sudden cry of wonder
From Thalaba aroused her;
She raised her head, and saw
Where high in air a stately palace rose.
Amid a grove embower'd
Stood the prodigious pile;
Trees of such ancient majesty
Tower'd not on Yemen's happy hills,
Nor crown'd the lofty brow of Lebanon:
Fabric so vast, so lavishly enrich'd,
For Idol, or for Tyrant, never yet
Raised the slave race of man,
In Rome, nor in the elder Babylon,
Nor old Persepolis,
Nor where the family of Greece
Hymn'd Eleutherian Jove.

13

Here studding azure tablatures
And ray'd with feeble light,
Star-like the ruby and the diamond shone:
Here on the golden towers
The yellow moon-beam lay,
Here with white splendour floods the silver wall.
Less wondrous pile and less magnificent
Sennamar built at Hirah, though his art
Seal'd with one stone the ample edifice,
And made its colours, like the serpent's skin,
Play with a changeful beauty: him, its Lord,
Jealous lest after effort might surpass
The then unequall'd palace, from its height
Dash'd on the pavement down.

14

They enter'd, and through aromatic paths
Wondering they went along.
At length, upon a mossy bank,
Beneath a tall mimosa's shade,
Which o'er him bent its living canopy,
They saw a man reclined.
Young he appear'd, for on his cheek there shone
The morning glow of health,
And the brown beard curl'd close around his chin.
He slept, but at the sound
Of coming feet awaking, fix'd his eyes
In wonder, on the wanderer and her child.
'Forgive us,' Zeinab cried,
'Distress hath made us bold.
Relieve the widow and the fatherless!
Blessed are they who succour the distrest;
For them hath God appointed Paradise.'

15

He heard, and he look'd up to heaven,
And tears ran down his cheeks:
'It is a human voice!
I thank thee, O my God!..
How many an age hath pass'd
Since the sweet sounds have visited my ear!
I thank thee, O my God,
It is a human voice!'

16

To Zeinab turning then, he said,
'O mortal, who art thou,

Whose gifted eyes have pierced
The shadow of concealment that hath wrapt
These bowers, so many an age,
From eye of mortal man ?
For countless years have pass'd,
And never foot of man
The bowers of Irem trod, . .
Save only I, a miserable wretch
From Heaven and Earth shut out ! '

17

Fearless, and scarce surprised,
For grief in Zeinab's soul
All other feebler feelings overpower'd,
She answer'd, ' Yesterday
I was a wife beloved,
The fruitful mother of a numerous race.
I am a widow now,
Of all my offspring this alone is left.
Praise to the Lord our God,
He gave, He takes away ! '

18

Then said the stranger, ' Not by Heaven unseen, [reach'd
Nor in unguided wanderings, hast thou
This secret place, be sure !
Nor for light purpose is the veil,
That from the Universe has long shut out
These ancient bowers, withdrawn.
Hear thou my words, O mortal, in thine heart
Treasure what I shall tell ;
And when amid the world
Thou shalt emerge again,
Repeat the warning tale. [make
Why have the fathers suffer'd, but to
The children wisely safe ?

19

' The Paradise of Irem this,
And this that wonder of the world,
The Palace built by Shedad in his pride.
Alas ! in the days of my youth,
The hum of mankind
Was heard in yon wilderness waste ;
O'er all the winding sands
The tents of Ad were pitch'd ;
Happy Al-Ahkâf then,
For many and brave were her sons,
Her daughters were many and fair.

20

' My name was Aswad then . .
Alas ! alas ! how strange
The sound so long unheard !
Of noble race I came,
One of the wealthy of the earth my sire.
An hundred horses in my father's stall,
Stood ready for his will ;
Numerous his robes of silk ;
The number of his camels was not known.
These were my heritage,
O God ! thy gifts were these ;
But better had it been for Aswad's soul
Had he ask'd alms on earth
And begg'd the crumbs which from his table fell,
So he had known thy Word.

21

' Boy, who hast reach'd my solitude,
Fear the Lord in the days of thy youth !
My knee was never taught
To bend before my God ;
My voice was never taught
To shape one holy prayer.
We worshipp'd Idols, wood and stone,
The work of our own foolish hands,
We worshipp'd in our foolishness.
Vainly the Prophet's voice
Its frequent warning raised,
" REPENT AND BE FORGIVEN ! " . .
We mock'd the messenger of God,
We mock'd the Lord, long-suffering, slow to wrath.

22

' A mighty work the pride of Shedad plann'd,
Here in the wilderness to form
A Garden more surpassing fair

Than that before whose gate
The lightning of the Cherub's fiery sword
Waves wide to bar access,
Since Adam, the transgressor, thence was driven.
Here, too, would Shedad build
A kingly pile sublime,
The palace of his pride.
For this exhausted mines
Supplied their golden store;
For this the central caverns gave their gems;
For this the woodman's axe
Open'd the cedar forest to the sun:
The silkworm of the East
Spun her sepulchral egg;
The hunter Afri [rage;
Provok'd the danger of the Elephant's
The Ethiop, keen of scent,
Detects the ebony,
That deep-inearth'd, and hating light,
A leafless tree and barren of all fruit,
With darkness feeds its boughs of raven grain. [pile;
Such were the treasures lavish'd in yon
Ages have pass'd away,
And never mortal eye
Gazed on their vanity.

23

'The Garden, . . copious springs
Blest that delightful spot,
And every flower was planted there
That makes the gale of evening sweet.
He spake, and bade the full-grown forest rise,
His own creation; should the King
Wait for slow Nature's work?
All trees that bend with luscious fruit,
Or wave with feathery boughs,
Or point their spiring heads to heaven,
Or spreading wide their shadowy arms, [noon, . .
Invite the traveller to repose at
Hither, uprooted with their native soil,
The labour and the pain of multitudes, . .
Mature in beauty, bore them.
Here, frequent in the walks
The marble statue stood
Of heroes and of chiefs.
The trees and flowers remain,
By Nature's care perpetuate and self-sown. [trace
The marble statues long have lost all
Of heroes and of chiefs;
Huge shapeless stones they lie,
O'ergrown with many a flower.

24

'The work of pride went on;
Often the Prophet's voice
Denounced impending woe:
We mock'd at the words of the Seer,
We mock'd at the wrath of the Lord.
A long-continued drought first troubled us;
Three years no cloud had form'd,
Three years no rain had fallen;
The wholesome herb was dry,
The corn matured not for the food of man,
The wells and fountains fail'd.
O hard of heart, in whom the punishment
Awoke no sense of guilt!
Headstrong to ruin, obstinately blind,
We to our Idols still applied for aid;
Sakia we invoked for rain,
We called on Razeka for food;
They did not hear our prayers, they could not hear!
No cloud appear'd in Heaven,
No nightly dews came down.

25

'Then to the Place of Concourse messengers [came,
Were sent, to Mecca, where the nations
Round the Red Hillock kneeling, to implore
God in his favour'd place.

We sent to call on God ; [earth
Ah fools ! unthinking that from all the
The soul ascends to him.
We sent to call on God ;
Ah fools ! to think the Lord
Would hear their prayers abroad,
Who made no prayers at home !

26

' Meantime the work of pride went on,
And still before our Idols, wood and stone,
We bow'd the impious knee.
" Turn, men of Ad, and call upon the Lord,"
The Prophet Houd exclaim'd ;
" Turn men of Ad, and look to Heaven,
And fly the wrath to come."—
We mock'd the Prophet's words ; . .
" Now dost thou dream, old man,
Or art thou drunk with wine ?
Future woe and wrath to come,
Still thy prudent voice forebodes ;
When it comes will we believe,
Till it comes will we go on
In the way our fathers went.
Now are thy words from God ?
Or dost thou dream, old man,
Or art thou drunk with wine ? "

27

' So spake the stubborn race,
The unbelieving ones.
I too, of stubborn unbelieving heart,
Heard him, and heeded not.
It chanced, my father went the way of man,
He perish'd in his sins.
The funeral rites were duly paid,
We bound a Camel to his grave,
And left it there to die,
So if the resurrection came
Together they might rise.
I pass'd my father's grave,
I heard the Camel moan.
She was his favourite beast,
One who had carried me in infancy,
The first that by myself I learn'd to mount. [her eyes
Her limbs were lean with famine, and
Ghastly and sunk and dim.
She knew me as I pass'd,
She stared me in the face ;
My heart was touch'd, . . had it been human else ?
I thought that none was near, and cut her bonds,
And drove her forth to liberty and life.
The Prophet Houd had seen ;
He lifted up his voice,
" Blessed art thou, young man,
Blessed art thou, O Aswad, for the deed !
In the Day of Visitation,
In the fearful hour of Judgement,
God will remember thee ! "

28

' The Day of Visitation was at hand,
The fearful hour of Judgement hastened on.
Lo ! Shedad's mighty pile complete,
The Palace of his pride.
Would ye behold its wonders, enter in !
I have no heart to visit it.
Time hath not harm'd the eternal monument ;
Time is not here, nor days, nor months, nor years,
An everlasting NOW of solitude ! .

29

' Ye must have heard their fame ;
Or likely ye have seen
The mighty Pyramids, . . [lived
For sure those aweful piles have over-
The feeble generations of mankind.
What though unmoved they bore the deluge weight,
Survivors of the ruined world ?
What though their founder fill'd with miracles [vaults ?
And wealth miraculous their spacious

Compared with yonder fabric, and they shrink
The baby wonders of a woman's work.

30

'Here emerald columns o'er the marble courts
Shed their green rays, as when amid a shower [corn.
The sun shines loveliest on the vernal
Here Shedad bade the sapphire floor be laid,
As though with feet divine
To tread on azure light, [ment.
Like the blue pavement of the firma-
Here self-suspended hangs in air,
As its pure substance loathed material touch,
The living carbuncle;
Sun of the lofty dome,
Darkness hath no dominion o'er its beams;
Intense it glows, an ever-flowing spring
Of radiance, like the day-flood in its source.

31

'Impious! the Trees of vegetable gold
Such as in Eden's groves
Yet innocent it grew;
Impious! he made his boast, though Heaven had hid
So deep the baneful ore, [him,
That they should branch and bud for
That art should force their blossoms and their fruit,
And re-create for him whate'er
Was lost in Paradise.
Therefore at Shedad's voice
Here tower'd the palm, a silver trunk,
The fine gold net-work growing out
Loose from its rugged boughs.
Tall as the cedar of the mountain, here
Rose the gold branches, hung with emerald leaves,
Blossom'd with pearls, and rich with ruby fruit.

32

'O Ad! my country! evil was the day
That thy unhappy sons
Crouch'd at this Nimrod's throne,
And placed him on the pedestal of power,
And laid their liberties beneath his feet,
Robbing their children of the heritance
Their fathers handed down.
What was to him the squander'd wealth?
What was to him the burthen of the land,
The lavish'd misery?
He did but speak his will,
And, like the blasting Siroc of the sands,
The ruin of the royal voice
Found its way every-where.
I marvel not that he, whose power
No earthly law, no human feeling curb'd,
Mock'd at the living God!

33

'And now the King's command went forth [young,
Among the people, bidding old and
Husband and wife, the master and the slave,
All the collected multitudes of Ad,
Here to repair, and hold high festival,
That he might see his people, they behold
Their King's magnificence and power.
The day of festival arrived;
Hither they came, the old man and the boy,
Husband and wife, the master and the slave,
Hither they came. From yonder high tower top,
The loftiest of the Palace, Shedad look'd
Down on his tribe: their tents on yonder sands
Rose like the countless billows of the sea;
Their tread and voices like the ocean roar,

One deep confusion of tumultuous sounds.
They saw their King's magnificence, beheld [domes
His palace sparkling like the Angel
Of Paradise, his Garden like the bowers
Of early Eden, and they shouted out,
"Great is the King! a God upon the earth!"

34

'Intoxicate with joy and pride,
He heard their blasphemies;
And in his wantonness of heart he bade
The Prophet Houd be brought;
And o'er the marble courts,
And o'er the gorgeous rooms
Glittering with gems and gold,
He led the Man of God.
"Is not this a stately pile?"
Cried the monarch in his joy.
"Hath ever eye beheld,
Hath ever thought conceived,
Place more magnificent?
Houd, they say that Heaven imparteth
Words of wisdom to thy lips;
Look at the riches round,
And value them aright,
If so thy wisdom can."

35

'The Prophet heard his vaunt,
And, with an aweful smile, he answer'd him,
"O Shedad! only in the hour of death
We learn to value things like these aright."

36

'"Hast thou a fault to find
In all thine eyes have seen?"
With unadmonished pride, the King exclaim'd.
"Yea!" said the Man of God;
"The walls are weak, the building ill secure.
Azrael can enter in!
The Sarsar can pierce through,
The Icy Wind of Death."

37

'I was beside the Monarch when he spake;
Gentle the Prophet spake,
But in his eye there dwelt
A sorrow that disturb'd me while I gazed.
The countenance of Shedad fell,
And anger sat upon his paler lips.
He to the high tower-top the Prophet led,
And pointed to the multitude,
And as again they shouted out,
"Great is the King! a God upon the Earth!"
With dark and threatful smile to Houd he turn'd,
"Say they aright, O Prophet? is the King
Great upon earth, a God among mankind?"
The Prophet answer'd not;
Over that infinite multitude
He roll'd his ominous eyes,
And tears which could not be suppressed gush'd forth.

38

'Sudden an uproar rose,
A cry of joy below;
"The messenger is come!
Kaïl from Mecca comes,
He brings the boon obtain'd!"

39

'Forth as we went we saw where overhead
There hung a deep black cloud,
To which the multitude
With joyful eyes look'd up,
And blest the coming rain.
The Messenger addrest the King
And told his tale of joy.

40

' " To Mecca I repair'd,
By the Red Hillock knelt,
And call'd on God for rain.
My prayer ascended, and was heard;
Three clouds appear'd in heaven,
One white, and like the flying cloud of noon,
One red, as it had drunk the evening beams,
One black and heavy with its load of rain.
A voice went forth from Heaven,
' Choose, Kaïl, of the three ! '
I thank'd the gracious Power,
And chose the black cloud, heavy with its wealth."
" Right ! right ! " a thousand tongues exclaim'd,
And all was merriment and joy.

41

' Then stood the Prophet up, and cried aloud,
" Woe, woe to Irem ! woe to Ad !
DEATH is gone up into her palaces !
Woe ! woe ! a day of guilt and punishment;
A day of desolation ! "—As he spake,
His large eye roll'd in horror, and so deep
His tone, it seem'd some Spirit from within
Breathed through his moveless lips the unearthly voice.

42

' All looks were turn'd to him. " O Ad ! " he cried,
" Dear native land, by all remembrances
Of childhood, by all joys of manhood dear;
O Vale of many Waters; morn and night
My age must groan for you, and to the grave
Go down in sorrow. Thou wilt give thy fruits,
But who shall gather them ? thy grapes will ripen,
But who shall tread the wine-press ? Fly the wrath,
Ye who would live and save your souls alive !
For strong is his right hand that bends the Bow,
The Arrows that he shoots are sharp,
And err not from their aim ! "

43

' With that a faithful few
Prest through the throng to join him. Then arose
Mockery and mirth; " Go, bald head ! " and they mix'd
Curses with laughter. He set forth, yet once
Look'd back: . . his eye fell on me, and he call'd
" Aswad ! " . . it startled me . . it terrified;
" Aswad ! " again he call'd, . . and I almost
Had follow'd him. . . O moment fled too soon !
O moment irrecoverably lost !
The shouts of mockery made a coward of me;
He went, and I remain'd, in fear of MAN !

44

' He went, and darker grew
The deepening cloud above.
At length it open'd, and . . O God !
O God !
There were no waters there !
There fell no kindly rain !
The Sarsar from its womb went forth,
The Icy Wind of Death.

45

' They fell around me; thousands fell around,
The King and all his people fell;
All ! all ! they perish'd all !
I . . only I . . was left.
There came a Voice to me and said,
" In the Day of Visitation,
In the fearful hour of Judgement,
God hath remember'd thee."

46

'When from an agony of prayer I rose,
And from the scene of death
Attempted to go forth,
The way was open, I could see
No barrier to my steps.
But round these bowers the Arm of God
Had drawn a mighty chain,
A barrier that no human force might break.
Twice I essay'd to pass;
With that a Voice was heard,
"O Aswad, be content, and bless the Lord!
One charitable deed hath saved
Thy soul from utter death.
O Aswad, sinful man!
When by long penitence
Thou feel'st thy soul prepared
Breathe up the wish to die,
And Azrael comes in answer to thy prayer."

47

'A miserable man
From Earth and Heaven shut out,
I heard the dreadful Voice.
I look'd around my prison-place,
The bodies of the dead were there,
Where'er I look'd they lay,
They moulder'd, moulder'd here, . .
Their very bones have crumbled into dust,
So many years have pass'd!
So many weary ages have gone by!
And still I linger here, [sins,
Still groaning with the burthen of my
Not yet have dared to breathe
The prayer to be released.

48

'Oh! who can tell the unspeakable misery
Of solitude like this!
No sound hath ever reach'd my ear
Save of the passing wind,
The fountain's everlasting flow,
The forest in the gale,
The pattering of the shower,
Sounds dead and mournful all.
No bird hath ever closed her wing
Upon these solitary bowers,
No insect sweetly buzz'd amid these groves,
From all things that have life,
Save only me, conceal'd.
This Tree alone, that o'er my head
Hangs down its hospitable boughs,
And bends its whispering leaves
As though to welcome me,
Seems to partake of life;
I love it as my friend, my only friend!

49

'I know not for what ages I have dragg'd
This miserable life;
How often I have seen
These ancient trees renew'd;
What countless generations of mankind
Have risen and fallen asleep,
And I remain the same!
My garment hath not waxen old,
And the sole of my shoe is not worn.

50

'Sinner that I have been,
I dare not offer up a prayer to die.
O merciful Lord God! . .
But when it is thy will,
But when I have atoned
For mine iniquities,
And sufferings have made pure
My soul with sin defiled,
Release me in thine own good time; . .
I will not cease to praise thee, O my God!'

51

Silence ensued awhile;
Then Zeinab answer'd him;
'Blessed art thou, O Aswad! for the Lord,
Who saved thy soul from Hell,

Will call thee to him in his own good time.
And would that when my soul
Breathed up the wish to die,
Azrael might visit me!
Then would I follow where my babes are gone,
And join Hodeirah now!

52

She ceased; and the rushing of wings
Was heard in the stillness of night,
And Azrael, the Death-Angel, stood before them.
His countenance was dark,
Solemn, but not severe,
It awed, but struck no terror to the heart.
'Zeinab, thy wish is heard!
Aswad, thine hour is come!'
They fell upon the ground and blest the voice;
And Azrael from his sword
Let fall the drops of bitterness and death.

53

'Me too! me too!' young Thalaba exclaim'd,
As wild with grief he kiss'd
His Mother's livid hand,
His Mother's livid lips;
'O Angel! take me too!'

54

'Son of Hodeirah!' the Death-Angel said,
'It is not yet the hour.
Son of Hodeirah, thou art chosen forth
To do the will of Heaven;
To avenge thy father's death,
The murder of thy race;
To work the mightiest enterprize
That mortal man hath wrought.
Live! and REMEMBER DESTINY
HATH MARK'D THEE FROM MANKIND!'

55

He ceased, and he was gone.
Young Thalaba look'd round, . .
The Palace and the groves were seen no more,
He stood amid the Wilderness, alone.

THE SECOND BOOK

Sint licet expertes vitae sensusque, capessunt
Jussa tamen superum venti.
Mambruni Constantinus.

1

NOT in the desert,
Son of Hodeirah,
Thou art abandon'd!
The co-existent fire, [for thee,
Which in the Dens of Darkness burnt
Burns yet, and yet shall burn.

2

In the Domdaniel caverns,
Under the Roots of the Ocean,
Met the Masters of the Spell.
Before them in the vault,
Blazing unfuel'd from its floor of rock,
Ten magic flames arose.
'Burn, mystic fires;' Abdaldar cried;
'Burn while Hodeirah's dreaded race exist.
This is the appointed hour, [night.'
The hour that shall secure these dens of

3

'Dim they burn!' exclaim'd Lobaba;
'Dim they burn, and now they waver!
Okba lifts the arm of death:
They waver, . . they go out!'

4

'Curse on his hasty hand!'
Khawla exclaim'd in wrath,
The woman-fiend exclaim'd, [fail'd!
'Curse on his hasty hand, the fool hath
Eight only are gone out.'

5

A Teraph stood against the cavern-side,
A new-born infant's head,
Which Khawla at its hour of birth had seized,
And from the shoulders wrung.
It stood upon a plate of gold,
An unclean Spirit's name inscrib'd beneath.
The cheeks were deathy dark,
Dark the dead skin upon the hairless skull;
The lips were bluey pale;
Only the eyes had life,
They gleam'd with demon light.

6

'Tell me!' quoth Khawla, 'is the Fire gone out
That threats the Masters of the Spell?'
The dead lips moved and spake,
'The Fire still burns that threats
The Masters of the Spell.'

7

'Curse on thee, Okba!' Khawla cried,
As to the den the Sorcerer came;
He bore the dagger in his hand,
Red from the murder of Hodeirah's race.
'Behold those unextinguish'd flames!
The Fire still burns that threats
The Masters of the Spell!
Okba, wert thou weak of heart?
Okba, wert thou blind of eye?
Thy fate and ours were on the lot,
And we believ'd the lying Stars,
That said thy hand might seize the auspicious hour!
Thou hast let slip the reins of Destiny, . .
Curse thee, curse thee, Okba!'

8

The Murderer, answering, said,
'O versed in all enchanted lore,
Thou better knowest Okba's soul!
Eight blows I struck, eight home-driven blows,
Needed no second stroke
From this envenom'd blade.
Ye frown at me as if the will had fail'd;
As if ye did not know
My double danger from Hodeirah's race,
The deeper hate I feel,
The stronger motive that inspir'd my arm!
Ye frown as if my hasty fault,
My ill-directed blow,
Had spared the enemy;
And not the Stars that would not give,
And not your feeble spells
That could not force, the sign
Which of the whole was he.
Did ye not bid me strike them all?
Said ye not root and branch should be destroy'd?
I heard Hodeirah's dying groan,
I heard his Children's shriek of death,
And sought to consummate the work;
But o'er the two remaining lives
A cloud unpierceable had risen,
A cloud that mock'd my searching eyes.
I would have probed it with the dagger-point,
The dagger was repell'd;
A Voice came forth and said,
"Son of Perdition, cease! Thou canst not change
What in the Book of Destiny is written."'

9

Khawla to the Teraph turn'd,
'Tell me where the Prophet's hand
Hides our destined enemy?'
The dead lips spake again,
'I view the seas, I view the land,
I search the Ocean and the Earth!
Not on Ocean is the Boy,
Not on Earth his steps are seen.'

10

'A mightier power than we,' Lobaba cried
'Protects our destined foe.
Look! look! one Fire burns dim!
It quivers! it goes out!'

11

It quiver'd, it was quench'd.
One Flame alone was left,
A pale blue Flame that trembled on the floor,
A hovering light, upon whose shrinking edge
The darkness seem'd to press.
Stronger it grew, and spread
Its lucid swell around,
Extending now where all the ten had stood
With lustre more than all.

12

At that portentous sight
The Children of Evil trembled,
And terror smote their souls.
Over the den the Fire
Its fearful splendour cast,
The broad base rolling up in wavy streams,
Bright as the summer lightning when it spreads
Its glory o'er the midnight heaven.
The Teraph's eyes were dimm'd,
Which like two twinkling stars
Shone in the darkness late.
The Sorcerers on each other gazed,
And every face, all pale with fear,
And ghastly, in that light was seen
Like a dead man's by the sepulchral lamp.

13

Even Khawla, fiercest of the enchanter brood,
Not without effort drew
Her fear-suspended breath.
Anon a deeper rage
Inflamed her reddening eye.
'Mighty is thy power, Mahommed!'
Loud in blasphemy she cried;
'But Eblis would not stoop to Man,
When Man, fair-statured as the stately palm
From his Creator's hand
Was undefiled and pure.
Thou art mighty, O Son of Abdallah!
But who is he of woman born
That shall vie with the might of Eblis?
That shall rival the Prince of the Morning?'

14

She said, and raised her skinny hand
As in defiance to high Heaven,
And stretch'd her long lean finger forth,
And spake aloud the words of power.
The Spirits heard her call,
And lo! before her stands
Her Demon Minister.
'Spirit!' the Enchantress cried,
'Where lives the Boy, coeval with whose life
Yon magic Fire must burn?'

15

DEMON

Mistress of the mighty Spell,
Not on Ocean, not on Earth,
Only eyes that view
Allah's glory-throne,
See his hiding-place.
From some believing Spirit, ask and learn.

16

'Bring the dead Hodeirah here,'
Khawla cried, 'and he shall tell!'
The Demon heard her bidding, and was gone.
A moment pass'd, and at her feet
Hodeirah's corpse was laid;
His hand still held the sword he grasp'd in death,
The blood not yet had clotted on his wound.

17

The Sorceress look'd, and with a smile
That kindled to more fiendishness
Her hideous features, cried,
'Where art thou, Hodeirah, now?
Is thy soul in Zemzem-well?
Is it in the Eden groves?

Waits it for the judgement-blast
In the trump of Israfil ?
Is it, plumed with silver wings,
Underneath the throne of God ?
Even though beneath His throne,
Hodeirah, thou shalt hear
Thou shalt obey my voice ! '

18

She said, and mutter'd charms which Hell in fear,
And Heaven in horror heard.
Soon the stiff eye-balls roll'd,
The muscles with convulsive motion shook,
The white lips quiver'd. Khawla saw, her soul
Exulted, and she cried,
' Prophet ! behold my power !
Not even death secures
Thy slaves from Khawla's spell !
Where, Hodeirah, is thy child ? '

19

Hodeirah groan'd and closed his eyes,
As if in the night and the blindness of death
He would have hid himself.

20

' Speak to my question ! ' she exclaim'd,
' Or in that mangled body thou shalt live
Ages of torture ! Answer me !
Where can we find the boy ? '

21

' God ! God ! ' Hodeirah cried,
' Release me from this life,
From this intolerable agony ! '

22

' Speak ! ' cried the Sorceress, and she snatch'd
A Viper from the floor
And with the living reptile lash'd his neck.
Wreath'd round him with the blow,
The reptile tighter drew her folds,
And raised her wrathful head,
And fix'd into his face
Her deadly teeth and shed
Poison in every wound. [prayer,
In vain ! for Allah heard Hodeirah's
And Khawla on a corpse
Had wreak'd her baffled rage.
The fated Fire moved on, [flames.
And round the Body wrapt its funeral
The flesh and bones in that portentous pile
Consumed ; the Sword alone,
Circled with fire, was left.

23

Where is the Boy for whose hand it is destined ? [wield
Where the Destroyer who one day shall
The Sword that is circled with fire ?
Race accursed, try your charms !
Masters of the mighty Spell,
Mutter o'er your words of power !
Ye can shatter the dwellings of man ;
Ye can open the womb of the rock ;
Ye can shake the foundations of earth,
But not the Word of God :
But not one letter can ye change
Of what his Will hath written.

24

Who shall seek through Araby
Hodeirah's dreaded son ?
They mingle the Arrows of Chance,
The lot of Abdaldar is drawn.
Thirteen moons must wax and wane
Ere the Sorcerer quit his quest.
He must visit every tribe
That roam the desert wilderness,
Or dwell beside perennial streams ;
Nor leave a solitary tent unsearch'd,
Till he hath found the Boy, . .
The dreaded Boy, whose blood alone
Can quench that fated Fire.

25

A crystal ring Abdaldar wore ;
The powerful gem condensed
Primeval dews, that upon Caucasus
Felt the first winter's frost.

Ripening there it lay beneath
Rock above rock, and mountain ice up-
piled [assumed,
On mountain, till the incumbent mass
So huge its bulk, the Ocean's azure hue.

26

With this he sought the inner den
Where burnt the Eternal Fire.
Like waters gushing from some chan-
nell'd rock [a chasm
Full through a narrow opening, from
The Eternal Fire stream'd up.
No eye beheld the spring
Of that up-flowing Flame,
Which blazed self-nurtured, and for ever,
there.
It was no mortal element; the Abyss
Supplied it, from the fountains at the
first [and glows
Prepared. In the heart of earth it lives
Her vital heat, till, at the day decreed,
The voice of God shall let its billows loose,
To deluge o'er with no abating flood
Our consummated World;
Which must from that day in infinity
Through endless ages roll,
A penal orb of Fire.

27

Unturban'd and unsandal'd there,
Abdaldar stood before the Flame,
And held the Ring beside, and spake
The language that the Elements obey.
The obedient Flame detach'd a portion
forth, [densed,
Which, in the crystal entering, was con-
Gem of the gem, its living Eye of fire.
When the hand that wears the spell
Shall touch the destined Boy,
Then shall that Eye be quench'd,
And the freed Element
Fly to its sacred and remember'd Spring.

28

Now go thy way, Abdaldar!
Servant of Eblis,
Over Arabia
Seek the Destroyer!
Over the sands of the scorching Tehama,
Over the waterless mountains of Naÿd;
In Arud pursue him, and Yemen the
happy,
And Hejaz, the country beloved by
believers,
Over Arabia,
Servant of Eblis,
Seek the Destroyer!

29

From tribe to tribe, from town to town,
From tent to tent, Abdaldar pass'd.
Him every morn the all-beholding Eye
Saw from his couch, unhallow'd by a
prayer,
Rise to the scent of blood;
And every night lie down,
That rankling hope within him, that by
day [sleep,
Goaded his steps, still stinging him in
And startling him with vain accomplish-
ment
From visions still the same.
Many a time his wary hand
To many a youth applied the Ring;
And still the imprison'd Fire
Within its crystal socket lay comprest,
Impatient to be free.

30

At length to the cords of a tent,
That were stretch'd by an Island of
Palms,
In the desolate sea of the sands,
The seemly traveller came.
Under a shapely palm,
Herself as shapely, there a Damsel stood;
She held her ready robe,
And look'd towards a Boy,
Who from the tree above,
With one hand clinging to its trunk,
Cast with the other down the cluster'd
dates.

31

The Magician approach'd the Tree,
He lean'd on his staff, like a way-faring man,
And the sweat of his travel was seen on his brow.
He ask'd for food, and lo!
The Damsel proffers him her lap of dates;
And the Stripling descends, and runs to the tent,
And brings him forth water, the draught of delight.

32

Anon the Master of the tent,
The Father of the family,
Came forth, a man in years, of aspect mild.
To the stranger approaching he gave
The friendly saluting of peace,
And bade the skin be spread.
Before the tent they spread the skin,
Under a Tamarind's shade,
That, bending forward, stretch'd
Its boughs of beauty far.

33

They brought the Traveller rice,
With no false colours tinged to tempt the eye,
But white as the new-fallen snow,
When never yet the sullying Sun
Hath seen its purity,
Nor the warm zephyr touch'd and tainted it.
The dates of the grove before their guest
They laid, and the luscious fig,
And water from the well.

34

The Damsel from the Tamarind tree
Had pluck'd its acid fruit,
And steep'd it in water long;
And whoso drank of the cooling draught,
He would not wish for wine.
This to their guest the Damsel brought,
And a modest pleasure kindled her cheek,
When raising from the cup his moisten'd lips,
The stranger smiled, and praised, and drank again.

35

Whither is gone the Boy?
He had pierced the Melon's pulp,
And closed with wax the wound,
And he had duly gone at morn
And watch'd its ripening rind,
And now all joyfully he brings
The treasure now matured;
His dark eyes sparkling with a boy's delight,
As out he pours its liquid lusciousness,
And proffers to the guest.

36

Abdaldar ate, and he was satisfied:
And now his tongue discoursed
Of regions far remote,
As one whose busy feet had travell'd long.
The father of the family,
With a calm eye and quiet smile,
Sate pleased to hearken him.
The Damsel who removed the meal,
She loiter'd on the way,
And listen'd with full hands
A moment motionless.

37

All eagerly the Boy
Watches the Traveller's lips;
And still the wily man
With seemly kindness, to the eager Boy
Directs his winning tale.
Ah, cursed one! if this be he,
If thou hast found the object of thy search,
Thy hate, thy bloody aim, . .
Into what deep damnation wilt thou plunge
Thy miserable soul! . .

38

Look! how his eye delighted watches thine! . .
Look! how his open lips

Gape at the winning tale ! . .
And nearer now he comes,
To lose no word of that delightful talk.
Then, as in familiar mood,
Upon the stripling's arm
The Sorcerer laid his hand,
And the Fire of the Crystal fled.

39

While the sudden shoot of joy
Made pale Abdaldar's cheek,
The Master's voice was heard ;
' It is the hour of prayer, . .
My children, let us purify ourselves,
And praise the Lord our God ! '
The Boy the water brought ;
After the law they purified themselves,
And bent their faces to the earth in prayer.

40

All, save Abdaldar ; over Thalaba
He stands, and lifts the dagger to destroy.
Before his lifted arm received
Its impulse to descend,
The Blast of the Desert came.
Prostrate in prayer, the pious family
Felt not the Simoom pass.
They rose, and lo ! the Sorcerer lying dead,
Holding the dagger in his blasted hand.

THE THIRD BOOK

Time will produce events of which thou canst have no idea ; and he to whom thou gavest no commission, will bring thee unexpected news.—*Moallakat, Poem of Tarafat*

1

THALABA

Oneiza, look ! the dead man has a ring, . .
Should it be buried with him ?

ONEIZA

Oh yes . . yes ! [needs
A wicked man ! whate'er is his must
Be wicked too !

THALABA

But see, . . the sparkling stone ?
How it hath caught the glory of the Sun,
And shoots it back again in lines of light !

ONEIZA

Why do you take it from him, Thalaba ?
And look at it so close ? . . it may have charms
To blind, or poison ; . . throw it in the grave !
I would not touch it !

THALABA

And around its rim
Strange letters . .

ONEIZA

Bury it . . oh ! bury it !

THALABA

It is not written as the Koran is :
Some other tongue perchance ; . . the accursed man
Said he had been a traveller.

MOATH (*coming from the tent*)

Thalaba,
What hast thou there ?

THALABA

A ring the dead man wore ;
Perhaps, my father, you can read its meaning.

MOATH

No, Boy ; . . the letters are not such as ours.
Heap the sand over it ! a wicked man
Wears nothing holy.

THALABA

Nay ! not bury it !
It may be that some traveller, who shall enter
Our tent, may read it : or if we approach
Cities where strangers dwell and learned men,
They may interpret.

MOATH

It were better hid
Under the desert sands. This wretched man, [purpose
Whom God hath smitten in the very
And impulse of his unpermitted crime,
Belike was some magician, and these lines
Are of the language that the Demons use.

ONEIZA

Bury it! bury it . . dear Thalaba!

MOATH

Such cursed men there are upon the earth, [powers,
In league and treaty with the Evil
The covenanted enemies of God
And of all good; dear purchase have they made [sway,
Of rule and riches, and their life-long
Masters, yet slaves of Hell. Beneath the roots
Of Ocean, the Domdaniel caverns lie,
Their impious meeting; there they learn the words
Unutterable by man who holds his hope [and let
Of heaven; there brood the pestilence,
The earthquake loose.

THALABA

And he who would have kill'd me
Was one of these?

MOATH

I know not; . . but it may be
That on the Table of Destiny, thy name
Is written their Destroyer, and for this
Thy life by yonder miserable man
So sought, so saved by interfering Heaven.

THALABA

His ring has some strange power then?

MOATH

Every gem, [science,
So sages say, hath virtue; but the
Of difficult attainment; some grow pale,
Conscious of poison, or with sudden change
Of darkness, warn the wearer; some preserve
From spells, or blunt the hostile weapon's edge;
Some open rocks and mountains, and lay bare [sight
Their buried treasures; others make the
Strong to perceive the presence of those Beings [empty air
Through whose pure essence as through
The unaided eye would pass;
And in yon stone I deem
Some such mysterious quality resides.

THALABA

My father, I will wear it.

MOATH

Thalaba!

THALABA

In God's name, and the Prophet's! be its power [evil,
Good, let it serve the righteous; if for
God, and my trust in Him, shall hallow it.

2

So Thalaba drew on
The written ring of gold.
Then in the hollow grave
They laid Abdaldar's corpse,
And levell'd over him the desert dust.

3

The Sun arose, ascending from beneath
The horizon's circling line.
As Thalaba to his ablutions went,
Lo! the grave open, and the corpse exposed!
It was not that the winds of night
Had swept away the sands which cover'd it;
For heavy with the undried dew
The desert dust lay dark and close around; [still,
And the night air had been so calm and
It had not from the grove
Shaken a ripe date down.

4

Amazed to hear the tale,
Forth from the tent came Moath and his child. [corpse
Awhile he stood contemplating the
Silent and thoughtfully;
Then turning, spake to Thalaba, and said, [the abode
'I have heard that there are places by
Of holy men, so holily possess'd,
That should a corpse be laid irreverently
Within their precincts, the insulted ground,
Impatient of pollution, heaves and shakes
The abomination out.
Have then in elder times the happy feet
Of Patriarch, or of Prophet bless'd the place,
Ishmael, or Houd, or Saleah, or than all,
Mahommed, holier name? Or is the man
So foul with magic and all blasphemy,
That Earth, like Heaven, rejects him? It is best [tent.
Forsake the station. Let us strike our
The place is tainted . . and behold
The Vulture hovers yonder, and his scream
Chides us that still we scare him from the prey.
So let the accursed one,
Torn by that beak obscene,
Find fitting sepulchre.'

5

Then from the pollution of death
With water they made themselves pure;
And Thalaba drew up
The fastening of the cords;
And Moath furl'd the tent;
And from the grove of palms Oneiza led
The Camels, ready to receive their load.

6

The dews had ceased to steam
Toward the climbing Sun,
When from the Isle of Palms they went their way;
And when the Sun had reach'd his southern height,
As back they turn'd their eyes,
The distant Palms arose
Like to the top-sails of some fleet far-off
Distinctly seen, where else
The Ocean bounds had blended with the sky;
And when the eve came on,
The sight returning reach'd the grove no more.
They planted the pole of their tent,
And they laid them down to repose.

7

At midnight Thalaba started up,
For he felt that the ring on his finger was moved;
He call'd on Allah aloud,
And he call'd on the Prophet's name.
Moath arose in alarm;
'What ails thee, Thalaba?' he cried,
'Is the robber of night at hand?'
'Dost thou not see,' the youth exclaim'd,
'A Spirit in the tent?'
Moath look'd round and said,
'The moon-beam shines in the tent,
I see thee stand in the light,
And thy shadow is black on the ground.'

8

Thalaba answer'd not.
'Spirit!' he cried, 'what brings thee here?
In the name of the Prophet, speak,
In the name of Allah, obey!'

9

He ceased, and there was silence in the tent.
'Dost thou not hear?' quoth Thalaba;
The listening man replied,
'I hear the wind, that flaps
The curtain of the tent.'

10

'The Ring! the Ring!' the youth exclaim'd.
'For that the Spirit of Evil comes;
By that I see, by that I hear.
In the name of God, I ask thee,
Who was he that slew my Father?'

DEMON

Master of the powerful Ring!
Okba, the dread Magician, did the deed.

THALABA

Where does the Murderer dwell?

DEMON

In the Domdaniel caverns,
Under the Roots of the Ocean.

THALABA

Why were my Father and my brethren slain?

DEMON

We knew from the race of Hodeirah
The destined Destroyer would come.

THALABA

Bring me my father's sword!

DEMON

A Fire surrounds the fatal sword;
No Spirit or Magician's hand
Can pierce that fated Flame.

THALABA

Bring me his bow and his arrows!

11

Distinctly Moath heard the youth, and She [watch'd
Who, through the Veil of Separation,
The while in listening terror, and suspense
All too intent for prayer.
They heard the voice of Thalaba;
But when the Spirit spake, the motionless air
Felt not the subtile sounds,
Too fine for mortal sense.

12

On a sudden the rattle of arrows was heard,
And a quiver was laid at the feet of the youth,
And in his hand they saw Hodeirah's bow.
He eyed the bow, he twang'd the string,
And his heart bounded to the joyous tone.
Anon he raised his voice and cried,
'Go thy way, and never more,
Evil spirit, haunt our tent!
By the virtue of the Ring,
By Mahommed's holier might,
By the holiest name of God,
Thee, and all the Powers of Hell,
I adjure and I command
Never more to trouble us!'

13

Nor ever from that hour
Did rebel Spirit on the tent intrude,
Such virtue had the Spell.

14

Thus peacefully the vernal years
Of Thalaba pass'd on,
Till now, without an effort, he could bend
Hodeirah's stubborn bow.
Black were his eyes and bright,
The sunny hue of health
Glow'd on his tawny cheek,
His lip was darken'd by maturing life;
Strong were his shapely limbs, his stature tall;
Peerless among Arabian youths was he.

15

Compassion for the child
Had first old Moath's kindly heart possess'd,
An orphan, wailing in the wilderness;
But when he heard his tale, his wondrous tale, [truth,
Told by the Boy, with such eye-speaking

Now with sudden burst of anger,
Now in the agony of tears,
And now with flashes of prophetic joy,
What had been pity became reverence then,
And, like a sacred trust from Heaven,
The Old Man cherish'd him.
Now, with a father's love,
Child of his choice, he loved the Boy,
And, like a father, to the Boy was dear.
Oneiza call'd him brother; and the youth
More fondly than a brother loved the maid;
The loveliest of Arabian maidens she.
How happily the years
Of Thalaba went by!

16

It was the wisdom and the will of Heaven,
That in a lonely tent had cast
The lot of Thalaba;
There might his soul develope best
Its strengthening energies;
There might he from the world
Keep his heart pure and uncontaminate,
Till at the written hour he should be found
Fit servant of the Lord, without a spot.

17

Years of his youth, how rapidly ye fled
In that beloved solitude!
Is the morn fair, and doth the freshening breeze
Flow with cool current o'er his cheek?
Lo! underneath the broad-leaved sycamore
With lids half-closed he lies,
Dreaming of days to come.
His dog beside him, in mute blandishment,
Now licks his listless hand;
Now lifts an anxious and expectant eye,
Courting the wonted caress.

18

Or comes the Father of the Rains
From his caves in the uttermost West,
Comes he in darkness and storms?
When the blast is loud;
When the waters fill
The traveller's tread in the sands;
When the pouring shower
Streams adown the roof;
When the door-curtain hangs in heavier folds:
When the out-strain'd tent flags loosely:
Within there is the embers' cheerful glow,
The sound of the familiar voice,
The song that lightens toil, . .
Domestic Peace and Comfort are within.
Under the common shelter, on dry sand,
The quiet Camels ruminate their food;
The lengthening cord from Moath falls,
As patiently the Old Man
Entwines the strong palm-fibres; by the hearth
The Damsel shakes the coffee-grains,
That with warm fragrance fill the tent;
And while, with dexterous fingers,
Thalaba
Shapes the green basket, haply at his feet
Her favourite kidling gnaws the twig,
Forgiven plunderer, for Oneiza's sake.

19

Or when the winter torrent rolls
Down the deep-channel'd rain-course, foamingly,
Dark with its mountain spoils,
With bare feet pressing the wet sand,
There wanders Thalaba,
The rushing flow, the flowing roar,
Filling his yielded faculties,
A vague, a dizzy, a tumultuous joy.

20

Or lingers it a vernal brook
Gleaming o'er yellow sands?
Beneath the lofty bank reclined,

With idle eye he views its little waves,
Quietly listening to the quiet flow;
While in the breathings of the stirring gale,
The tall canes bend above,
Floating like streamers on the wind
Their lank uplifted leaves.

21

Nor rich, nor poor, was Moath; God hath given [content.
Enough, and blest him with a mind
No hoarded gold disquieted his dreams:
But ever round his station he beheld
Camels that knew his voice,
And home-birds, grouping at Oneiza's call,
And goats that, morn and eve,
Came with full udders to the Damsel's hand.
Dear child! the tent beneath whose shade they dwelt
It was her work; and she had twined
His girdle's many hues;
And he had seen his robe
Grow in Oneiza's loom.
How often, with a memory-mingled joy
Which made her Mother live before his sight, [the woof!
He watch'd her nimble fingers thread
Or at the hand-mill, when she knelt and toil'd,
Toss'd the thin cake on spreading palm,
Or fix'd it on the glowing oven's side
With bare wet arm, and safe dexterity.

22

'Tis the cool evening hour:
The Tamarind from the dew
Sheathes its young fruit, yet green.
Before their tent the mat is spread;
The Old Man's solemn voice
Intones the holy Book.
What if beneath no lamp-illumined dome, [truth,
Its marble walls bedeck'd with flourish'd
Azure and gold adornment? sinks the word
With deeper influence from the Imam's voice,
Where in the day of congregation, crowds
Perform the duty-task?
Their Father is their Priest,
The Stars of Heaven their point of prayer,
And the blue Firmament
The glorious Temple, where they feel
The present Deity.

23

Yet through the purple glow of eve
Shines dimly the white moon.
The slacken'd bow, the quiver, the long lance,
Rest on the pillar of the Tent.
Knitting light palm-leaves for her brother's brow,
The dark-eyed damsel sits;
The old Man tranquilly
Up his curl'd pipe inhales
The tranquillizing herb.
So listen they the reed of Thalaba,
While his skill'd fingers modulate
The low, sweet, soothing, melancholy tones.

24

Or if he strung the pearls of Poesy,
Singing with agitated face
And eloquent arms, and sobs that reach the heart,
A tale of love and woe;
Then, if the brightening Moon that lit his face,
In darkness favour'd hers, [say,
Oh! even with such a look, as fables
The Mother Ostrich fixes on her egg,
Till that intense affection
Kindle its light of life,
Even in such deep and breathless tenderness

Oneiza's soul is centred on the youth,
So motionless, with such an ardent gaze, . .
Save when from her full eyes
She wipes away the swelling tears
That dim his image there.

25

She call'd him Brother; was it sister-love
For which the silver rings
Round her smooth ankles and her tawny arms, [eye
Shone daily brighten'd? for a brother's
Were her long fingers tinged,
As when she trimm'd the lamp,
And through the veins and delicate skin
The light shone rosy? that the darken'd lids
Gave yet a softer lustre to her eye?
That with such pride she trick'd
Her glossy tresses, and on holy-day
Wreathed the red flower-crown round
Their waves of glossy jet?
How happily the days
Of Thalaba went by!
Years of his youth how rapidly ye fled!

26

Yet was the heart of Thalaba
Impatient of repose;
Restless he ponder'd still
The task for him decreed,
The mighty and mysterious work announced.
Day by day, with youthful ardour,
He the call of Heaven awaits;
And oft in visions, o'er the murderer's head,
He lifts the avenging arm!
And oft, in dreams, he sees
The Sword that is circled with fire.

27

One morn, as was their wont, in sportive mood, [bow;
The youth and damsel bent Hodeirah's
For with no feeble hand, nor erring aim,
Oneiza could let loose the obedient shaft.
With head back-bending, Thalaba
Shot up the aimless arrow high in air,
Whose line in vain the aching sight pursued,
Lost in the depth of Heaven.
'When will the hour arrive,' exclaim'd the youth,
'That I shall aim these fated shafts
To vengeance long delay'd?
Have I not strength, my father, for the deed?
Or can the will of Providence
Be mutable like man?
Shall I never be call'd to the task?'

28

'Impatient boy!' quoth Moath, with a smile:
'Impatient Thalaba!' Oneiza cried,
And she too smiled; but in her smile
A mild reproachful melancholy mix'd.

29

Then Moath pointed where a cloud
Of locusts, from the desolated fields
Of Syria wing'd their way.
'Lo! how created things
Obey the written doom!'

30

Onward they came, a dark continuous cloud
Of congregated myriads numberless,
The rushing of whose wings was as the sound
Of some broad river, headlong in its course
Plunged from a mountain summit; or the roar
Of a wild ocean in the autumnal storm,
Shattering its billows on a shore of rocks,
Onward they came, the winds impell'd them on,
Their work was done, their path of ruin past,
Their graves were ready in the wilderness.

31

'Behold the mighty army!' Moath cried,
'Blindly they move, impell'd
By the blind Element.
And yonder birds our welcome visitants,
See! where they soar above the embodied host,
Pursue their way, and hang upon the rear,
And thin the spreading flanks,
Rejoicing o'er their banquet! Deemest thou [mosque
The scent of water on some Syrian
Placed with priest-mummery and fantastic rites [here
Which fool the multitude, hath led them
From far Khorassan? Allah who appoints
Yon swarms to be a punishment of man,
These also hath he doom'd to meet their way:
Both passive instruments
Of his all-acting will,
Sole mover He, and only spring of all.'

32

While thus he spake, Oneiza's eye looks up
Where one toward her flew,
Satiate, for so it seem'd, with sport and food.
The Bird flew over her,
And as he pass'd above,
From his relaxing grasp a Locust fell;..
It fell upon the Maiden's robe,
And feebly there it stood, recovering slow.

33

The admiring girl survey'd
His out-spread sails of green;
His gauzy underwings, [furl'd,
One closely to the grass-green body
One ruffled in the fall, and half unclosed.
She view'd his jet-orb'd eyes,
His glossy gorget bright,
Green glittering in the sun;
His plumy pliant horns,
That, nearer as she gazed,
Bent tremblingly before her breath.
She mark'd his yellow-circled front
With lines mysterious vein'd;
And 'know'st thou what is here inscribed,
My father?' said the Maid.
'Look, Thalaba! perchance these lines
Are in the letters of the Ring,
Nature's own language written here.'

34

The youth bent down, and suddenly
He started, and his heart
Sprung, and his cheek grew red,
For these mysterious lines were legible,..
WHEN THE SUN SHALL BE DARKENED AT NOON,
SON OF HODEIRAH, DEPART.
And Moath look'd, and read the lines aloud;
The Locust shook his wings and fled,
And they were silent all.

35

Who then rejoiced but Thalaba?
Who then was troubled but the Arabian Maid?
And Moath sad of heart,
Though with a grief supprest, beheld the youth
Sharpen his arrows now,
And now new-plume their shafts,
Now, to beguile impatient hope,
Feel every sharpen'd point.

36

'Why is that anxious look,' Oneiza ask'd,
'Still upward cast at noon?
Is Thalaba aweary of our tent?'
'I would be gone,' the youth replied,
'That I might do my task,
And full of glory to the tent return,
Whence I should part no more.'

37

But on the noontide sun,
As anxious and as oft, Oneiza's eye
Was upward glanced in fear.
And now, as Thalaba replied, her cheek
Lost its fresh and lively hue;
For in the Sun's bright edge
She saw, or thought she saw, a little speck.
The sage Astronomer
Who, with the love of science full,
Trembled that day at every passing cloud, . . [small.
He had not seen it, 'twas a speck so

38

Alas! Oneiza sees the spot increase!
And lo! the ready youth
Over his shoulder the full quiver slings,
And grasps the slacken'd bow.
It spreads, and spreads, and now
Hath shadow'd half the sun,
Whose crescent-pointed horns
Now momently decrease.

39

The day grows dark, the birds retire to rest:
Forth from her shadowy haunt
Flies the large-headed screamer of the night.
Far off the affrighted African,
Deeming his God deceased,
Falls on his knees in prayer,
And trembles as he sees
The fierce hyena's eyes
Glare in the darkness of that dreadful noon.

40

Then Thalaba exclaim'd, 'Farewell,
My father! my Oneiza!' the Old Man
Felt his throat swell with grief.
'Where wilt thou go, my child?' he cried,
'Wilt thou not wait a sign
To point thy destined way?'
'God will conduct me!' said the faithful youth.
He said, and from the tent,
In the depth of the darkness departed.
They heard his parting steps,
The quiver rattling as he pass'd away.

THE FOURTH BOOK

——Fas est quoque brutae
Telluri, docilem monitis coelestibus esse.
Mambruni Constantinus.

1

Whose is yon dawning form,
That in the darkness meets
The delegated youth?
Dim as the shadow of a fire at noon,
Or pale reflection on the evening brook
Of glow-worm on the bank,
Kindled to guide her winged paramour.

2

A moment, and the brightening image shaped [she cried,
His Mother's form and features. 'Go,'
'To Babylon, and from the Angels learn
What talisman thy task requires.'

3

The Spirit hung toward him when she ceased,
As though with actual lips she would have given
A mother's kiss. His arms outstretch'd,
His body bending on,
His mouth unclosed and trembling into speech, [wind
He prest to meet the blessing, . . but the
Play'd on his cheek: he look'd, and he beheld [he cried,
The darkness close. 'Again! again!'
'Let me again behold thee!' from the darkness
His Mother's voice went forth;
'Thou shalt behold me in the hour of death.'

4

Day dawns, the twilight gleam dilates,
The Sun comes forth, and like a god
Rides through rejoicing heaven.
Old Moath and his daughter, from their tent,
Beheld the adventurous youth,
Dark-moving o'er the sands,
A lessening image, trembling through their tears.
Visions of high emprize
Beguiled his lonely road;
And if sometimes to Moath's tent
The involuntary mind recurr'd,
Fancy, impatient of all painful thoughts,
Pictured the bliss should welcome his return.
In dreams like these he went,
And still of every dream
Oneiza form'd a part,
And hope and memory made a mingled joy.

5

In the eve he arrived at a Well;
An Acacia bent over its side,
Under whose long light-hanging boughs
He chose his night's abode.
There, due ablutions made, and prayers perform'd,
The youth his mantle spread,
And silently produced
His solitary meal.
The silence and the solitude recall'd
Dear recollections; and with folded arms,
Thinking of other days, he sate, till thought
Had left him, and the Acacia's moving shade
Upon the sunny sand,
Had caught his idle eye;
And his awaken'd ear
Heard the grey Lizard's chirp,
The only sound of life.

6

As thus in vacant quietness he sate,
A Traveller on a Camel reached the Well,
And courteous greeting gave.
The mutual salutation past,
He by the cistern too his garment spread
And friendly converse cheer'd the social meal.

7

The Stranger was an ancient man,
Yet one whose green old age
Bore the fair characters of temperate youth:
So much of manhood's strength his limbs retain'd,
It seem'd he needed not the staff he bore.
His beard was long, and grey, and crisp;
Lively his eyes and quick,
And reaching over them
The large broad eye-brow curl'd.
His speech was copious, and his winning words
Enrich'd with knowledge, that the attentive youth
Sate listening with a thirsty joy.

8

So in the course of talk,
The adventurer youth enquired
Whither his course was bent?
The Old Man answered, 'To Bagdad I go.'
At that so welcome sound, a flash of joy
Kindled the eye of Thalaba;
'And I too,' he replied,
'Am journeying thitherward;
Let me become companion of thy way!'
Courteous the Old Man smiled,
And willing in assent.

9

OLD MAN

Son, thou art young for travel.

THALABA

Until now
I never pass'd the desert boundary.

OLD MAN

It is a noble city that we seek.
Thou wilt behold magnificent palaces,
And lofty minarets, and high-domed Mosques,
And rich Bazars, whither from all the world [ket there
Industrious merchants meet, and mar-
The World's collected wealth.

THALABA

Stands not Bagdad
Near to the site of ancient Babylon
And Nimrod's impious temple ?

OLD MAN

From the walls
'Tis but a long day's distance.

THALABA

And the ruins ?

OLD MAN

A mighty mass remains ; enough to tell us
How great our fathers were, how little we.
Men are not what they were ; their crimes and follies
Have dwarf'd them down from the old hero race
To such poor things as we !

THALABA

At Babylon
I have heard the Angels expiate their guilt,
Haruth and Maruth.

OLD MAN

'Tis a history
Handed from ages down ; a nurse's tale . .
Which children open-eyed and mouth'd devour ; [relates,
And thus as garrulous ignorance
We learn it and believe. . . But all things feel [and grass
The power of Time and Change ; thistles
Usurp the desolate palace, and the weeds [Truth.
Of falsehood root in the aged pile of
How have you heard the tale ?

THALABA

Thus . . on a time
The Angels at the wickedness of man
Express'd indignant wonder ; that in vain
Tokens and signs were given, and Prophets sent, . .
Strange obstinacy this ! a stubbornness
Of sin, they said, that should for ever bar [heard
The gates of mercy on them. Allah
Their unforgiving pride, and bade that two
Of these untempted Spirits should descend,
Judges on Earth. Haruth and Maruth went, [heard
The chosen Sentencers ; they fairly
The appeals of men to their tribunal brought,
And rightfully decided. At the length
A Woman came before them ; beautiful
Zohara was, as yonder Evening Star,
In the mild lustre of whose lovely light
Even now her beauty shines. They gazed on her [sin.
With fleshly eyes, they tempted her to
The wily woman listen'd, and required
A previous price, the knowledge of the name [name,
Of God. She learnt the wonder-working
And gave it utterance, and its virtue bore her
Up to the glorious Presence, and she told
Before the aweful Judgement-Seat her tale.

OLD MAN

I know the rest. The accused Spirits were call'd ;
Unable of defence, and penitent,

They own'd their crime, and heard the doom deserved.
Then they besought the Lord, that not for ever
His wrath might be upon them; and implored
That penal ages might at length restore them [Babylon,
Clean from offence; since then by
In the cavern of their punishment, they dwell.
Runs the conclusion so?

THALABA

So I am taught.

OLD MAN

The common tale! And likely thou hast heard
How that the bold and bad, with impious rites
Intrude upon their penitence, and force,
Albeit from loathing and reluctant lips,
The sorcery-secret?

THALABA

Is it not the truth?

OLD MAN

Son, thou hast seen the Traveller in the sands
Move through the dizzy light of hot noon-day,
Huge as the giant race of elder times;
And his Camel, than the monstrous Elephant,
Seem of a vaster bulk.

THALABA

A frequent sight.

OLD MAN

And hast thou never, in the twilight, fancied
Familiar object into some strange shape
And form uncouth?

THALABA

Ay! many a time.

OLD MAN

Even so
Things view'd at distance through the mist of fear,
By their distortion terrify and shock
The abused sight.

THALABA

But of these Angels' fate
Thus in the uncreated book is written.

OLD MAN

Wisely from legendary fables, Heaven
Inculcates wisdom.

THALABA

How then is the truth?
Is not the dungeon of their punishment
By ruin'd Babylon?

OLD MAN

By Babylon
Haruth and Maruth may be found.

THALABA

And there
Magicians learn their impious sorcery?

OLD MAN

Son, what thou say'st is true, and it is false.
But night approaches fast; I have travell'd far,
And my old lids are heavy; . . on our way [us now
We shall have hours for converse; . . let
Turn to our due repose. Son, peace be with thee!

10

So in his loosen'd cloak
The Old Man wrapt himself,
And laid his limbs at length;
And Thalaba in silence laid him down.
Awhile he lay, and watch'd the lovely Moon,
O'er whose broad orb the boughs
A mazy fretting framed,
Or with a pale transparent green
Lighting the restless leaves,
The thin Acacia leaves that play'd above.

The murmuring wind, the moving leaves,
Soothed him at length to sleep,
With mingled lullabies of sight and sound.

11

Not so the dark Magician by his side,
Lobaba, who from the Domdaniel caves
Had sought the dreaded youth.
Silent he lay, and simulating sleep,
Till by the long and regular breath he knew
The youth beside him slept.
Carefully then he rose,
And bending over him, survey'd him near;
And secretly he cursed
The dead Abdaldar's ring,
Arm'd by whose amulet
He slept from danger safe.

12

Wrapt in his mantle Thalaba reposed,
His loose right arm pillowing his easy head.
The Moon was on the Ring,
Whose crystal gem return'd
A quiet, moveless light.
Vainly the Wizard vile put forth his hand,
And strove to reach the gem;
Charms, strong as hell could make them, kept it safe.
He call'd his servant-fiends,
He bade the Genii rob the sleeping youth.
By the virtue of the Ring,
By Mahommed's holier power,
By the holiest name of God,
Had Thalaba disarm'd the evil race.

13

Baffled and weary, and convinced at length, [him,
Anger, and fear, and rancour gnawing
The accursed Sorcerer ceased his vain attempts,
Content perforce to wait
Temptation's likelier aid.
Restless he lay, and brooding many a wile,
And tortured with impatient hope,
And envying with the bitterness of hate
The innocent youth, who slept so sweetly by.

14

The ray of morning on his eye-lids fell,
And Thalaba awoke,
And folded his mantle around him,
And girded his loins for the day;
Then the due rites of holiness observed.
His comrade too arose,
And with the outward forms
Of righteousness and prayer insulted God.
They fill'd their water skin, they gave
The Camel his full draught.
Then on the road, while yet the morn was young,
And the air was fresh with dew,
Forward the travellers went,
With various talk beguiling the long way.
But soon the youth, whose busy mind
Dwelt on Lobaba's wonder-stirring words,
Renew'd the unfinish'd converse of the night.

15

THALABA

Thou said'st that it is true, and yet is false,
That men accurst attain at Babylon
Forbidden knowledge from the Angel pair: . .
How mean you?

LOBABA

All things have a double power,
Alike for good and evil. The same fire
That on the comfortable hearth at eve
Warm'd the good man, flames o'er the house at night;

Should we for this forego
The needful element ?
Because the scorching summer Sun
Darts fever, would'st thou quench the orb of day ? [form'd
Or deemest thou that Heaven in anger
Iron to till the field, because when man
Had tipt his arrows for the chase, he rush'd
A murderer to the war ?

THALABA

What follows hence ?

LOBABA

That nothing in itself is good or evil,
But only in its use. Think you the man
Praiseworthy, who by painful study learns [pain
The knowledge of all simples, and their power,
Healing or harmful ?

THALABA

All men hold in honour
The skilful Leech. From land to land he goes
Safe in his privilege ; the sword of war
Spares him ; Kings welcome him with costly gifts ;
And he who late had from the couch of pain
Lifted a languid look to him for aid,
Beholds him with glad eyes, and blesses him
In his first thankful prayer.

LOBABA

Yet some there are
Who to the purposes of wickedness
Apply this knowledge, and from herbs distil
Poison, to mix it in the trusted draught.

THALABA

Allah shall cast them in the eternal fire
Whose fuel is the cursed ! there shall they
Endure the ever-burning agony,
Consuming still in flames, and still renew'd.

LOBABA

But is their knowledge therefore in itself
Unlawful ?

THALABA

That were foolishness to think.

LOBABA

O what a glorious animal were Man,
Knew he but his own powers, and, knowing, gave them
Room for their growth and spread ! The Horse obeys
His guiding will ; the patient Camel bears him [wafts
Over these wastes of sand ; the Pigeon
His bidding through the sky ; . . and with these triumphs
He rests contented ! . . with these ministers, . .
When he might awe the Elements, and make
Myriads of Spirits serve him !

THALABA

But as how ?
By a league with Hell, a covenant that binds
The soul to utter death !

LOBABA

Was Solomon
Accurst of God ? Yet to his talismans
Obedient, o'er his throne the birds of Heaven,
Their waving wings his sun-shield, fann'd around him [to place,
The motionless air of noon ; from place
As his will rein'd the viewless Element,
He rode the Wind ; the Genii rear'd his temple,
And ceaselessly in fear while his dread eye [their toil,
O'erlook'd them, day and night pursued
So dreadful was his power.

THALABA

But 'twas from Heaven
His wisdom came; God's special gift, . . the guerdon
Of early virtue.

LOBABA

Learn thou, O young man!
God hath appointed wisdom the reward
Of study! 'Tis a well of living waters,
Whose inexhaustible bounties all might drink,
But few dig deep enough. Son! thou art silent, . .
Perhaps I say too much, . . perhaps offend thee.

THALABA

Nay, I am young, and willingly, as becomes me,
Hear the wise words of age.

LOBABA

Is it a crime
To mount the Horse, because forsooth thy feet [sin,
Can serve thee for the journey? . . Is it
Because the Hern soars upward in the sky [Falcon
Above the arrow's flight, to train the
Whose beak shall pierce him there? The powers which Allah
Granted to man, were granted for his use; [weakness
All knowledge that befits not human
Is placed beyond its reach. . . They who repair
To Babylon, and from the Angels learn
Mysterious wisdom, sin not in the deed.

THALABA

Know you these secrets?

LOBABA

I? alas! my Son,
My age just knows enough to understand
How little all its knowledge! Later years
Sacred to study, teach me to regret
Youth's unforeseeing indolence, and hours [I know
That cannot be recall'd! Something
The properties of herbs, and have sometimes [relief
Brought to the afflicted comfort and
By the secrets of my art; under His blessing [Gems
Without whom all had fail'd! Also of
I have some knowledge, and the characters [set.
That tell beneath what aspect they were

THALABA

Belike you can interpret then the graving
Around this Ring!

LOBABA

My sight is feeble, Son,
And I must view it closer; let me try!

16

The unsuspecting Youth
Held forth his finger to draw off the spell.
Even whilst he held it forth,
There settled there a Wasp,
And just above the Gem infix'd its dart;
All purple-swoln the hot and painful flesh
Rose round the tighten'd Ring.
The baffled Sorcerer knew the hand of Heaven,
And inwardly blasphemed.

17

Ere long Lobaba's heart,
Fruitful in wiles, devised new stratagem.
A mist arose at noon,
Like the loose hanging skirts
Of some low cloud that, by the breeze impell'd,
Sweeps o'er the mountain side.
With joy the thoughtless youth
That grateful shadowing hail'd;
For grateful was the shade,
While through the silver-lighted haze,
Guiding their way, appear'd the beamless Sun.

But soon that beacon fail'd;
A heavier mass of cloud,
Impenetrably deep,
Hung o'er the wilderness.
'Knowest thou the track?' quoth Thalaba,
'Or should we pause, and wait the wind
To scatter this bewildering fog?'
The Sorcerer answer'd him,
'Now let us hold right on, . . for if we stray,
The Sun to-morrow will direct our course.'
So saying, he toward the desert depths
Misleads the youth deceived.

18

Earlier the night came on,
Nor moon, nor stars, were visible in heaven;
And when at morn the youth unclosed his eyes,
He knew not where to turn his face in prayer.
'What shall we do?' Lobaba cried,
'The lights of heaven have ceased
To guide us on our way.
Should we remain and wait
More favourable skies,
Soon would our food and water fail us here:
And if we venture on,
There are the dangers of the wilderness!'

19

'Sure it were best proceed!'
The chosen youth replies;
'So haply we may reach some tent, or grove
Of dates, or station'd tribe.
But idly to remain,
Were yielding effortless, and waiting death.'
The wily sorcerer willingly assents,
And farther in the sands,
Elate of heart, he leads the credulous youth.

20

Still o'er the wilderness
Settled the moveless mist.
The timid Antelope, that heard their steps,
Stood doubtful where to turn in that dim light;
The Ostrich, blindly hastening, met them full.
At night, again in hope,
Young Thalaba lay down; [ray
The morning came, and not one guiding
Through the thick mist was visible,
The same deep moveless mist that mantled all.

21

Oh for the Vulture's scream,
Who haunts for prey the abode of humankind!
Oh for the Plover's pleasant cry
To tell of water near!
Oh for the Camel-driver's song
For now the water-skin grows light,
Though of the draught, more eagerly desired,
Imperious prudence took with sparing thirst.
Oft from the third night's broken sleep,
As in his dreams he heard
The sound of rushing winds,
Started the anxious youth, and look'd abroad,
In vain! for still the deadly calm endured.
Another day pass'd on;
The water-skin was drain'd;
But then one hope arrived,
For there was motion in the air!
The sound of the wind arose anon,
That scatter'd the thick mist,
And lo! at length the lovely face of Heaven!

22

Alas! . . a wretched scene
Was open'd on their view.
They look'd around, no wells were near,
No tent, no human aid!

Flat on the Camel lay the water-skin,
And their dumb servant difficultly now,
Over hot sands and under the hot sun,
Dragg'd on with patient pain.

23

But oh the joy! the blessed sight!
When in that burning waste the Travellers
Saw a green meadow, fair with flowers
Azure and yellow, like the beautiful fields
Of England, when amid the growing grass
The blue-bell bends, the golden king-cup shines,
And the sweet cowslip scents the genial air,
In the merry month of May!
Oh joy! the Travellers
Gaze on each other with hope-brighten'd eyes,
For sure through that green meadow flows
The living stream! And lo! their famish'd beast
Sees the restoring sight!
Hope gives his feeble limbs a sudden strength,
He hurries on! . .

24

The herbs so fair to eye
Were Senna, and the Gentian's blossom blue,
And kindred plants, that with unwater'd root
Fed in the burning sand, whose bitter leaves
Even frantic Famine loathed.

25

In uncommunicating misery
Silent they stood. At length Lobaba said,
'Son, we must slay the Camel, or we die
For lack of water! thy young hand is firm, . .
Draw forth the knife and pierce him!'
Wretch accurst!
Who that beheld thy venerable face,
Thy features stiff with suffering, the dry lips,
The feverish eyes, could deem that all within
Was magic ease, and fearlessness secure,
And wiles of hellish import? The young man
Paused with reluctant pity: but he saw
His comrade's red and painful countenance,
And his own burning breath came short and quick,
And at his feet the gasping beast
Lies, over-worn with want.

26

Then from his girdle Thalaba took the knife
With stern compassion, and from side to side
Across the Camel's throat,
Drew deep the crooked blade.
Servant of man, that merciful deed
For ever ends thy suffering; but what doom
Waits thy deliverer? 'Little will thy
Avail us!' thought the youth,
As in the water-skin he pour'd
The Camel's hoarded draught;
It gave a scant supply,
The poor allowance of one prudent day.

27

Son of Hodeirah, though thy steady soul
Despair'd not, firm in faith,
Yet not the less did suffering nature feel
Its pangs and trials. Long their craving thirst
Struggled with fear, by fear itself inflamed;
But drop by drop, that poor,
That last supply is drain'd.
Still the same burning sun! no cloud in heaven!

The hot air quivers, and the sultry mist
Floats o'er the desert with a show
Of distant waters, mocking their distress.

28

The youth's parch'd lips were black,
His tongue was dry and rough,
His eye-balls red with heat.
Lobaba gazed on him with looks
That seem'd to speak of pity, and he said,
'Let me behold thy Ring;
It may have virtue that can save us yet!'
With that he took his hand
And view'd the writing close,
Then cried with sudden joy,
'It is a stone that whoso bears,
The Genii must obey!
Now raise thy voice, my Son,
And bid them in His name that here is written
Preserve us in our need.'

29

'Nay!' answer'd Thalaba,
'Shall I distrust the providence of God?
Is it not He must save?
If Allah wills it not,
Vain were the Genii's aid.'

30

Whilst he spake, Lobaba's eye,
Upon the distance fix'd,
Attended not his speech.
Its fearful meaning drew
The looks of Thalaba;
Columns of sand came moving on,
Red in the burning ray,
Like obelisks of fire,
They rush'd before the driving wind.
Vain were all thoughts of flight!
They had not hoped escape,
Could they have back'd the Dromedary then,
Who in his rapid race [force.
Gives to the tranquil air a drowning

31

High . . high in heaven upcurl'd
The dreadful sand-spouts moved:
Swift as the whirlwind that impell'd their way,
They came toward the travellers!
The old Magician shriek'd,
And lo! the foremost bursts,
Before the whirlwind's force,
Scattering afar a burning shower of sand.
'Now by the virtue of the Ring,
Save us!' Lobaba cried,
'While yet thou hast the power,
Save us! O save us! now!'
The youth made no reply,
Gazing in aweful wonder on the scene.

32

'Why dost thou wait?' the Old Man exclaim'd,
'If Allah and the Prophet will not save,
Call on the powers that will!'

33

'Ha! do I know thee, Infidel accurst?'
Exclaim'd the awaken'd youth.
'And thou hast led me hither, Child of Sin!
That fear might make me sell
My soul to endless death!'

34

'Fool that thou art!' Lobaba cried,
'Call upon Him whose name
Thy charmed signet bears,
Or die the death thy foolishness deserves!'

35

'Servant of Hell! die thou!' quoth Thalaba.
And leaning on his bow
He fitted the loose string
And laid the arrow in its resting-place.
'Bow of my Father, do thy duty now!'

He drew the arrow to its point,
True to his eye it fled,
And full upon the breast
It smote the Sorcerer.
Astonish'd Thalaba beheld
The blunted point recoil.

36

A proud and bitter smile
Wrinkled Lobaba's cheek.
'Try once again thine earthly arms!' he cried.
'Rash Boy! the Power I serve
Abandons not his votaries.
It is for Allah's wretched slaves, like thou,
To serve a master, who in the hour of need
Forsakes them to their fate!
I leave thee!' . . and he shook his staff, and call'd
The Chariot of his charms.

37

Swift as the viewless wind,
Self-moved, the Chariot came;
The Sorcerer mounts the seat.
'Yet once more weigh thy danger!' he resumed,
'Ascend the car with me,
And with the speed of thought
We pass the desert bounds.'
The indignant youth vouchsafed not to reply,
And lo! the magic car begins its course!

38

Hark! hark! . . he shrieks . . Lobaba shrieks!
What, wretch, and hast thou raised
The rushing terrors of the Wilderness
To fall on thine own head?
Death! death! inevitable death!
Driven by the breath of God,
A column of the Desert met his way.

THE FIFTH BOOK

Thou hast girded me with strength unto the battle; thou hast subdued under me those that rose up against me. — *Psalm* xviii. 39.

1

When Thalaba from adoration rose,
The air was cool, the sky
With welcome clouds o'ercast,
Which soon came down in rain.
He lifted up his fever'd face to heaven,
And bared his head and stretch'd his hands
To that delightful shower,
And felt the coolness permeate every limb,
Freshening his powers of life.

2

A loud quick panting! Thalaba looks up,
He starts, and his instinctive hand
Grasps the knife hilt; for close beside
A Tiger passes him.
An indolent and languid eye
The passing Tiger turn'd;
His head was hanging down,
His dry tongue lolling low,
And the short panting of his breath
Came through his hot parch'd nostrils painfully.
The young Arabian knew
The purport of his hurried pace,
And following him in hope,
Saw joyful from afar
The Tiger stoop and drink.

3

A desert Pelican had built her nest
In that deep solitude,
And now, return'd from distant flight,
Fraught with the river-stream,
Her load of water had disburthen'd there.
Her young in the refreshing bath
Dipt down their callow heads,

Fill'd the swoln membrane from their plumeless throat
Pendant, and bills yet soft;
And buoyant with arch'd breast,
Plied in unpractised stroke
The oars of their broad feet.
They, as the spotted prowler of the wild
Laps the cool wave, around their mother crowd, [wings.
And nestle underneath her outspread
The spotted prowler of the wild
Lapt the cool wave, and satiate, from the nest,
Guiltless of blood, withdrew.

4

The mother-bird had moved not,
But cowering o'er her nestlings,
Sate confident and fearless,
And watch'd the wonted guest.
But when the human visitant approach'd,
The alarmed Pelican
Retiring from that hostile shape
Gathers her young, and menaces with wings,
And forward thrusts her threatening neck,
Its feathers ruffling in her wrath,
Bold with maternal fear.
Thalaba drank, and in the water-skin
Hoarded the precious element.
Not all he took, but in the large nest left
Store that sufficed for life;
And journeying onward, blest the Carrier Bird,
And blest, in thankfulness,
Their common Father, provident for all.

5

With strength renew'd, and confident in faith,
The son of Hodeirah proceeds;
Till after the long toil of many a day,
At length Bagdad appear'd,
The City of his search.
He hastening to the gate,
Roams o'er the city with insatiate eyes;
Its thousand dwellings, o'er whose level roofs [mosques,
Fair cupolas appear'd, and high-domed
And pointed minarets, and cypress groves
Every where scatter'd in unwithering green.

6

Thou too art fallen, Bagdad! City of Peace
Thou too hast had thy day;
And loathsome Ignorance and brute Servitude,
Pollute thy dwellings now,
Erst for the Mighty and the Wise renown'd.
O yet illustrious for remember'd fame,—
Thy founder the Victorious,—and the pomp [defiled,
Of Haroun, for whose name by blood
Yahia's, and the blameless Barmecides',
Genius hath wrought salvation,—and the years
When Science with the good Al-Maimon dwelt: [Mosques
So one day may the Crescent from thy
Be pluck'd by Wisdom, when the enlighten'd arm
Of Europe conquers to redeem the East!

7

Then Pomp and Pleasure dwelt within her walls; [West
The Merchants of the East and of the Met in her arch'd Bazars;
All day the active poor
Shower'd a cool comfort o'er her thronging streets;
Labour was busy in her looms;
Through all her open gates
Long troops of laden Camels lined the roads, [stream
And Tigris bore upon his tameless
Armenian harvests to her multitudes.

8

But not in sumptuous Caravansery
The adventurer idles there,
Nor satiates wonder with her pomp and wealth;
A long day's distance from the walls
Stands ruined Babylon;
The time of action is at hand;
The hope that for so many a year
Hath been his daily thought, his nightly dream,
Stings to more restlessness.
He loaths all lingering that delays the hour
When, full of glory, from his quest return'd,
He on the pillar of the Tent beloved
Shall hang Hodeirah's sword.

9

The many-coloured domes
Yet wore one dusky hue;
The Cranes upon the Mosque
Kept their night-clatter still;
When through the gate the early Traveller pass'd.
And when at evening o'er the swampy plain
The Bittern's boom came far,
Distinct in darkness seen
Above the low horizon's lingering light,
Rose the near ruins of old Babylon.

10

Once from her lofty walls the Charioteer
Look'd down on swarming myriads;
Her arches o'er Euphrates' conquer'd once she flung
And through her brazen portals when she pour'd
Her armies forth, the distant nations tide,
As men who watch the thunder-cloud in fear,
Lest it should burst above them. She look'd
was fallen,
The Queen of cities, Babylon, was fallen!
Low lay her bulwarks; the black
Scorpion bask'd
In the palace courts; within the sanctuary
The She-Wolf hid her whelps.
Is yonder huge and shapeless heap, what once
Hath been the aërial Gardens, height on height
Rising like Media's mountains crown'd with wood,
Work of imperial dotage? Where the fane
Of Belus? Where the Golden Image now,
Which at the sound of dulcimer and lute,
Cornet and sacbut, harp and psaltery,
The Assyrian slaves adored?
A labyrinth of ruins, Babylon
Spreads o'er the blasted plain:
The wandering Arab never sets his tent
Within her walls; the Shepherd eyes afar
Her evil towers, and devious drives his flock.
Alone unchanged, a free and bridgeless tide,
Euphrates rolls along,
Eternal Nature's work.

11

Through the broken portal,
Over weedy fragments,
Thalaba went his way.
Cautious he trod, and felt
The dangerous ground before him with his bow.
The Jackal started at his steps;
The Stork, alarm'd at sound of man,
From her broad nest upon the old pillar top,
Affrighted fled on flapping wings;
The Adder, in her haunts disturb'd,
Lanced at the intruding staff her arrowy tongue.

12

Twilight and moonshine dimly mingling gave
An aweful light obscure,
Evening not wholly closed,

The Moon still pale and faint:
An aweful light obscure,
Broken by many a mass of blackest shade;
Long column stretching dark through weeds and moss,
Broad length of lofty wall,
Whose windows lay in light,
And of their former shape, low arch'd or square,
Rude outline on the earth
Figured, with long grass fringed.

13

Reclined against a column's broken shaft,
Unknowing whitherward to bend his way,
He stood, and gazed around.
The Ruins closed him in;
It seem'd as if no foot of man
For ages had intruded there.

14

Soon at approaching step
Startling, he turn'd and saw
A Warrior in the moon-beam drawing near.
Forward the Stranger came,
And with a curious eye
Perused the Arab youth.

15

'And who art thou,' the Stranger cried,
'That at an hour like this
Wanderest in Babylon?
A way-bewilder'd traveller, seekest thou
The ruinous shelter here?
Or comest thou to hide
The plunder of the night?
Or hast thou spells to make
These ruins, yawning from their rooted base,
Disclose their secret wealth?'

16

The youth replied, 'Nor wandering traveller,
Nor robber of the night,
Nor skill'd in spells am I.
I seek the Angels here,
Haruth and Maruth. Stranger, in thy turn,
Why wanderest thou in Babylon,
And who art thou, the questioner?'

17

The man was fearless, and the temper'd pride
Which toned the voice of Thalaba
Displeased not him, himself of haughty heart.
Heedless he answered, 'Knowest thou
Their cave of punishment?'

18

THALABA

Vainly I seek it.

STRANGER

Art thou firm of foot
To tread the ways of danger?

THALABA

Point the path!

STRANGER

Young Arab! if thou hast a heart can beat [not
Evenly in danger; if thy bowels yearn
With human fears, at scenes where undisgraced
The soldier tried in battle might look back
And tremble, follow me! . . for I am bound
Into that cave of horrors.

19

Thalaba
Gazed on his comrade: he was young, of port
Stately and strong; belike his face had pleased [in it
A woman's eye; but the youth read
Unrestrain'd passions, the obdurate soul
Bold in all evil daring; and it taught,

By Nature's irresistible instinct, doubt
Well-timed and wary. Of himself assured,
Fearless of man, and firm in faith,
'Lead on!' cried Thalaba.
Mohareb led the way;
And through the ruin'd streets,
And through the farther gate,
They pass'd in silence on.

20

What sound is borne on the wind?
Is it the storm that shakes
The thousand oaks of the forest?
But Thalaba's long locks
Flow down his shoulders moveless, and the wind
In his loose mantle raises not a fold.
Is it the river's roar
Dash'd down some rocky descent?
Along the level plain
Euphrates glides unheard.
What sound disturbs the night,
Loud as the summer forest in the storm,
As the river that roars among rocks?

21

And what the heavy cloud
That hangs upon the vale,
Thick as the mist o'er a well-water'd plain
Settling at evening, when the cooler air
Lets its day-vapours fall;
Black as the sulphur-cloud,
That through Vesuvius, or from Hecla's mouth,
Rolls up, ascending from the infernal fires?

22

From Ait's bitumen-lake
That heavy cloud ascends;
That everlasting roar
From where its gushing springs
Boil their black billows up.
Silent the Arabian youth,
Along the verge of that wide lake,
Follow'd Mohareb's way,
Toward a ridge of rocks that bank'd its side.
There from a cave, with torrent force,
And everlasting roar,
The black bitumen roll'd.
The moonlight lay upon the rocks;
Their crags were visible,
The shade of jutting cliffs,
And where broad lichens whiten'd some smooth spot,
And where the ivy hung
Its flowing tresses down.
A little way within the cave
The moonlight fell, glossing the sable tide
That gush'd tumultuous out.
A little way it entered, then the rock
Arching its entrance, and the winding way,
Darken'd the unseen depths.

23

No eye of mortal man,
If unenabled by enchanted spell,
Had pierced those fearful depths;
For mingling with the roar
Of the portentous torrent, oft were heard
Shrieks, and wild yells that scared
The brooding Eagle from her midnight nest.
The affrighted countrymen
Call it the mouth of Hell;
And ever when their way leads near
They hurry with averted eyes,
And dropping their beads fast,
Pronounce the Holy Name.

24

There pausing at the cavern-mouth,
Mohareb turn'd to Thalaba:
'Now darest thou enter in?'
'Behold!' the youth replied,
And leading in his turn the dangerous way,
Set foot within the cave.

25

'Stay, Madman!' cried his comrade:
'Wouldst thou rush
Headlong to certain death?
Where are thine arms to meet
The Keeper of the Passage?' A loud shriek, [cave,
That shook along the windings of the
Scatter'd the youth's reply.

26

Mohareb, when the long re-echoing ceased,
Exclaim'd, 'Fate favour'd thee,
Young Arab! when she wrote upon thy brow
The meeting of to-night;
Else surely had thy name
This hour been blotted from the Book of Life!'

27

So saying, from beneath
His cloak a bag he drew:
'Young Arab! thou art brave,' he cried,
'But thus to rush on danger unprepared,
As lions spring upon the hunter's spear,
Is blind, brute courage. Zohak keeps the cave:
Against that Giant of primeval days
No force can win the passage.' Thus he said,
And from his wallet drew a human hand,
Shrivell'd and dry and black;
And fitting as he spake
A taper in its hold,
Pursued: 'A murderer on the stake had died! [lopt
I drove the Vulture from his limbs, and
The hand that did the murder, and drew up
The tendon strings to close its grasp,
And in the sun and wind
Parch'd it, nine weeks exposed.
The Taper, . . but not here the place to impart,
Nor hast thou undergone the rites,
That fit thee to partake the mystery.
Look! it burns clear, but with the air around,
Its dead ingredients mingle deathiness.
This when the Keeper of the Cave shall feel,
Maugre the doom of Heaven,
The salutary spell
Shall lull his penal agony to sleep,
And leave the passage free.'

28

Thalaba answer'd not.
Nor was there time for answer now,
For lo! Mohareb leads,
And o'er the vaulted cave,
Trembles the accursed taper's feeble light.
There where the narrowing chasm
Rose loftier in the hill,
Stood Zohak, wretched man, condemn'd to keep
His Cave of punishment.
His was the frequent scream
Which when far off the prowling Jackal heard,
He howl'd in terror back:
For from his shoulders grew
Two snakes of monster size,
Which ever at his head
Aim'd their rapacious teeth
To satiate raving hunger with his brain.
He, in the eternal conflict, oft would seize [grasp
Their swelling necks, and in his giant
Bruise them, and rend their flesh with bloody nails,
And howl for agony,
Feeling the pangs he gave, for of himself
Co-sentient and inseparable parts,
The snaky torturers grew.

29

To him approaching now,
Mohareb held the wither'd arm,

The taper of enchanted power.
The unhallow'd spell in hand unholy held,
Then minister'd to mercy; heavily
The wretch's eyelids closed;
And welcome and unfelt,
Like the release of death,
A sudden sleep surprised his vital powers.

30

Yet though along the cave relax'd
Lay Zohak's giant limbs, [pass,
The twin-born serpents kept the narrow
Kindled their fiery eyes,
Darted their tongues of terror, and roll'd out
Their undulating length, [ship
Like the long streamers of some gallant
Buoy'd on the wavy air,
Still struggling to flow on, and still withheld.
The scent of living flesh
Inflamed their appetite.

31

Prepared for all the perils of the cave,
Mohareb came. He from his wallet drew
Two human heads, yet warm.
O hard of heart! whom not the visible power
Of retributive Justice, and the doom
Of Zohak in his sight,
Deterr'd from equal crime!
Two human heads, yet warm, he laid
Before the scaly guardians of the pass;
They to their wonted banquet of old years [free.
Turn'd eager, and the narrow pass was

32

And now before their path
The opening cave dilates;
They reach a spacious vault,
Where the black river-fountains burst their way.
Now as a whirlwind's force
Had center'd on the spring,
The gushing flood roll'd up;
And now the deaden'd roar
Echoed beneath, collapsing as it sunk
Within a dark abyss,
Adown whose fathomless gulphs the eye was lost.

33

Blue flames that hover'd o'er the springs
Flung through the cavern their uncertain light;
Now waving on the waves they lay,
And now their fiery curls
Flow'd in long tresses up,
And now contracting, glow'd with whiter heat!
Then up they shot again,
Darting pale flashes through the tremulous air; [smoke,
The flames, the red and yellow sulphur-
And the black darkness of the vault,
Commingling indivisibly.

34

'Here,' quoth Mohareb, 'do the Angels dwell,
The Teachers of Enchantment.' Thalaba
Then raised his voice, and cried,
'Haruth and Maruth, hear me! Not with rites
Accursed, to disturb your penitence,
And learn forbidden lore,
Repentant Angels, seek I your abode;
But sent by Allah and the Prophet here,
Obediently I come,
Their chosen servant I.
Tell me the Talisman'—

35

'And dost thou think,'
Mohareb cried, as with a smile of scorn
He glanced upon his comrade, 'dost thou think
To trick them of their secret? For the dupes

Of human-kind keep this lip-righteousness!
'Twill serve thee in the Mosque
And in the Market-place,
But Spirits view the heart.
Only by strong and torturing spells enforced,
Those stubborn angels teach the charm
By which we must descend.'

36

'Descend?' said Thalaba.
But then the wrinkling smile
Forsook Mohareb's cheek,
And darker feelings settled on his brow.
'Now by my soul,' quoth he, 'and I believe,
Idiot! that I have led
Some camel-knee'd prayer-monger through the cave!
What brings thee hither? Thou should'st have a hut [way,
By some Saint's grave beside the public
There to less-knowing fools
Retail thy Koran-scraps,
And in thy turn die civet-like at last
In the dung-perfume of thy sanctity!..
Ye whom I seek! that, led by me,
Feet uninitiate tread
Your threshold, this atones!—
Fit sacrifice he falls!'
And forth he flash'd his scymetar,
And raised the murderous blow.

37

There ceased his power; his lifted arm,
Suspended by the spell,
Hung impotent to strike.
'Poor hypocrite!' cried he,
'And this then is thy faith
In Allah and the Prophet! They had fail'd
To save thee, but for Magic's stolen aid;
Yea, they had left thee yonder Serpent's meal,
But that, in prudent cowardice,
The chosen Servant of the Lord came in,
Safe follower of my path!'

38

'Blasphemer! dost thou boast of guiding me?'
Quoth Thalaba, with virtuous pride inflamed,
'Blindly the wicked work
The righteous will of Heaven!
Sayest thou that diffident of God,
In Magic spells I trust?
Liar! let witness this!'
And he drew off Abdaldar's Ring,
And cast it in the gulph.
A skinny hand came up,
And caught it as it fell,
And peals of devilish laughter shook the Cave.

39

Then joy suffused Mohareb's cheek,
And Thalaba beheld
The blue blade gleam, descending to destroy.

40

The undefended youth
Sprung forward, and he seized
Mohareb in his grasp,
And grappled with him breast to breast.
Sinewy and large of limb Mohareb was,
Broad-shoulder'd, and his joints
Knit firm, and in the strife
Of danger practised well.
Time had not thus matured young Thalaba;
But high-wrought feeling now,
The inspiration and the mood divine,
Infused a force portentous, like the strength
Of madness through his frame.
Mohareb reels before him; he right on,
With knee, with breast, with arm,
Presses the staggering foe;

And now upon the brink
Of that tremendous spring, . .
There with fresh impulse and a rush of force,
He thrust him from his hold.
The upwhirling flood received
Mohareb, then, absorb'd,
Engulph'd him in the abyss.

41

Thalaba's breath came fast,
And panting, he breath'd out
A broken prayer of thankfulness.
At length he spake and said,
'Haruth and Maruth! are ye here?
Or hath that evil guide misled my search?
I, Thalaba, the Servant of the Lord,
Invoke you. Hear me, Angels! so may Heaven
Accept and mitigate your penitence.
I go to root from earth the Sorcerer brood,
Tell me the needful Talisman!'

42

Thus as he spake, recumbent on the rock
Beyond the black abyss,
Their forms grew visible.
A settled sorrow sate upon their brows, . .
Sorrow alone, for trace of guilt and shame
None now remain'd; and gradual as by prayer
The sin was purged away,
Their robe of glory, purified of stain,
Resumed the lustre of its native light.

43

In awe the youth received the answering voice,
'Son of Hodeirah! thou hast proved it here;
The Talisman is Faith.'

THE SIXTH BOOK

Then did I see a pleasant Paradise,
Full of sweet flowers and daintiest delights,
Such as on earth man could not more devise
With pleasures choice to feed his cheerful sprights;
Not that which Merlin by his magic slights
Made for the gentle squire to entertain
His fair Belphoebe, could this garden stain.
SPENSER, *Ruins of Time.*

1

So from the inmost cave
Did Thalaba retrace
The windings of the rock.
Still on the ground the giant limbs
Of Zohak lay dispread;
The spell of sleep had ceased,
And his broad eyes were glaring on the youth:
Yet raised he not his arm to bar the way,
Fearful to rouse the snakes
Now lingering o'er their meal.

2

Oh then, emerging from that dreadful cave,
How grateful did the gale of night
Salute his freshen'd sense!
How full of lightsome joy,
Thankful to Heaven, he hastens by the verge
Of that bitumen-lake,
Whose black and heavy fumes,
Surge heaving after surge,
Roll'd like the billowy and tumultuous sea.

3

The song of many a bird at morn
Aroused him from his rest.
Lo! at his side a courser stood;
More animate of eye,
Of form more faultless never had he seen,
More light of limbs and beautiful in strength,
Among the race whose blood,

Pure and unmingled, from the royal steeds
Of Solomon came down.

4

The chosen Arab's eye
Glanced o'er his graceful shape,
His rich caparisons,
His crimson trappings gay.
But when he saw the mouth
Uncurb'd, the unbridled neck,
Then his heart leapt, and then his cheek was flush'd; [sent
For sure he deem'd that Heaven had
A courser, whom no erring hand might guide.
And lo! the eager Steed
Throws his head and paws the ground,
Impatient of delay!
Then up leapt Thalaba,
And away went the self-govern'd courser.

5

Over the plain
Away went the steed;
With the dew of the morning his fetlocks were wet, [of noon,
The foam froth'd his limbs in the journey
Nor stay'd he till over the westerly heaven
The shadows of evening had spread.
Then on a shelter'd bank
The appointed Youth reposed,
And by him laid the docile courser down.
Again in the grey of the morning
Thalaba bounded up;
Over hill, over dale,
Away goes the steed.
Again at eve he stops,
Again the Youth alights;
His load discharg'd, his errand done,
The courser then bounded away.

6

Heavy and dark the eve;
The Moon was hid on high,
A dim light tinged the mist
That crost her in the path of Heaven.
All living sounds had ceased,
Only the flow of waters near was heard,
A low and lulling melody.

7

Fasting, yet not of want
Percipient, he on that mysterious steed
Had reach'd his resting-place,
For expectation kept his nature up.
Now as the flow of waters near
Awoke a feverish thirst,
Led by the sound he moved
To seek the grateful wave.

8

A meteor in the hazy air
Play'd before his path;
Before him now it roll'd
A globe of living fire;
And now contracted to a steady light,
As when the solitary hermit prunes
His lamp's long undulating flame;
And now its wavy point
Up-blazing rose, like a young cypress tree
Sway'd by the heavy wind;
Anon to Thalaba it moved,
And wrapt him in its pale innocuous fire;
Now, in the darkness drown'd,
Left him with eyes bedimm'd,
And now, emerging, spread the scene to sight.

9

Led by the sound and meteor-flame,
The Arabian youth advanced.
Now to the nearest of the many rills
He stoops; ascending steam
Timely repels his hand,
For from its source it sprung, a boiling tide.
A second course with better hap he tries,
The wave intensely cold
Tempts to a copious draught.
There was a virtue in the wave:
His limbs, that stiff with toil

Dragg'd heavy, from the copious draught received
Lightness and supple strength.
O'erjoyed, and weening the benignant Power,
Who sent the reinless steed,
Had blest these healing waters to his use,
He laid him down to sleep,
Lull'd by the soothing and incessant sound,
The flow of many waters, blending oft
With shriller tones and deep low murmurings,
Which from the fountain caves
In mingled melody [came.
Like faery music, heard at midnight,

10

The sounds which last he heard at night
Awoke his recollection first at morn.
A scene of wonders lay before his eyes.
In mazy windings o'er the vale
A thousand streamlets stray'd,
And in their endless course
Had intersected deep the stony soil,
With labyrinthine channels islanding
A thousand rocks, which seem'd
Amid the multitudinous waters there
Like clouds that freckle o'er the summer sky,
The blue ethereal ocean circling each,
And insulating all.

11

Those islets of the living rock
Were of a thousand shapes,
And Nature with her various tints
Diversified anew their thousand forms;
For some were green with moss,
Some ruddier tinged, or grey, or silver-white,
And some with yellow lichens glow'd like gold, [sun.
Some sparkled sparry radiance to the
Here gush'd the fountains up,
Alternate light and blackness, like the play [arms.
Of sunbeams on a warrior's burnish'd
Yonder the river roll'd, whose ample bed,
Their sportive lingerings o'er,
Received and bore away the confluent rills.

12

This was a wild and wondrous scene,
Strange and beautiful, as where
By Oton-tala, like a sea of stars,
The hundred sources of Hoangho burst.
High mountains closed the vale,
Bare rocky mountains, to all living things
Inhospitable; on whose sides no herb
Rooted, no insect fed, no bird awoke
Their echoes, save the Eagle, strong of wing,
A lonely plunderer, that afar
Sought in the vales his prey.

13

Thither toward those mountains Thalaba
Following, as he believed, the path prescribed
By Destiny, advanced.
Up a wide vale that led into their depths,
A stony vale between receding heights
Of stone, he wound his way.
A cheerless place! the solitary Bee,
Whose buzzing was the only sound of life,
Flew there on restless wing, [fix.
Seeking in vain one flower, whereon to

14

Still Thalaba holds on;
The winding vale now narrows on his view,
And steeper of ascent,
Rightward and leftward rise the rocks,
And now they meet across the vale.
Was it the toil of human hands
Had hewn a passage in the rock,

Through whose rude portal-way
The light of heaven was seen ?
Rude and low the portal-way ;
Beyond, the same ascending straits
Went winding up the wilds.

15

Still a bare, silent, solitary glen,
A fearful silence, and a solitude
That made itself be felt ;
And steeper now the ascent,
A rugged path, that tired
The straining muscles, toiling slowly up.
At length again a rock
Stretch'd o'er the narrow vale ;
There also had a portal-way been hewn,
But gates of massy iron barr'd the pass,
Huge, solid, heavy-hinged.

16

There hung a horn beside the gate,
Ivory-tipt and brazen-mouth'd ;
He took the ivory tip,
And through the brazen-mouth he breath'd ;
Like a long thunder-peal,
From rock to rock rebounding rung the blast ;
The gates of iron, by no human arm
Unfolded, turning on their hinges slow,
Disclosed the passage of the rock.
He enter'd, and the iron gates fell to,
And with a clap like thunder closed him in.

17

It was a narrow winding way ;
Dim lamps suspended from the vault,
Lent to the gloom an agitated light.
Winding it pierced the rock,
A long descending path
By gates of iron closed ;
There also hung a horn beside
Of ivory tip and brazen mouth ;
Again he took the ivory tip,
And gave the brazen mouth its voice again.

Not now in thunder spake the horn,
But breathed a sweet and thrilling melody :
The gates flew open, and a flood of light
Rush'd on his dazzled eyes.

18

Was it to earthly Eden, lost so long,
The fated Youth had found his wondrous way ?
But earthly Eden boasts
No terraced palaces,
No rich pavilions bright with woven gold,
Like these that in the vale
Rise amid odorous groves.
The astonish'd Thalaba,
Doubting as though an unsubstantial dream
Beguiled him, closed his eyes,
And open'd them again ;
And yet uncertified,
He prest them close, and as he look'd around
Question'd the strange reality again.
He did not dream ;
They still were there,
The glittering tents,
The odorous groves,
The gorgeous palaces.

19

And lo ! a man, reverend in comely age,
Advancing greets the youth.
'Favour'd of Fortune,' thus he said,
'go taste
The joys of Paradise !
The reinless steed that ranges o'er the world,
Brings hither those alone for lofty deeds
Mark'd by their horoscope ; permitted thus
A foretaste of the full beatitude,
That in heroic acts they may go on
More ardent, eager to return and reap
Endless enjoyment here, their destined meed.

Favour'd of Fortune thou, go taste
The joys of Paradise!'

20

This said, he turn'd away, and left
The Youth in wonder mute;
For Thalaba stood mute,
And passively received
The mingled joy which flow'd on every sense.
Where'er his eye could reach,
Fair structures, rainbow-hued, arose;
And rich pavilions through the opening woods
Gleam'd from their waving curtains sunny gold;
And winding through the verdant vale,
Went streams of liquid light;
And fluted cypresses rear'd up
Their living obelisks;
And broad-leav'd plane-trees in long colonnades
O'er-arch'd delightful walks,
Where round their trunks the thousand tendrill'd vine
Wound up and hung the boughs with greener wreaths,
And clusters not their own. [eyes
Wearied with endless beauty, did his
Return for rest? beside him teems the earth
With tulips, like the ruddy evening streak'd;
And here the lily hangs her head of snow;
And here amid her sable cup
Shines the red-eye spot, like one brightest star,
The solitary twinkler of the night;
And here the rose expands
Her paradise of leaves.

21

Then on his ear what sounds
Of harmony arose!
Far music and the distance-mellow'd song
From bowers of merriment;
The waterfall remote;
The murmuring of the leafy groves;
The single nightingale
Perch'd in the rosier by, so richly toned,
That never from that most melodious bird,
Singing a love-song to his brooding mate,
Did Thracian shepherd by the grave
Of Orpheus hear a sweeter melody,
Though there the Spirit of the Sepulchre
All his own power infuse, to swell
The incense that he loves.

22

And oh! what odours the voluptuous vale
Scatters from jasmine bowers,
From yon rose wilderness,
From cluster'd henna and from orange groves,
That with such perfumes fill the breeze
As Peris to their Sister bear,
When from the summit of some lofty tree
She hangs encaged, the captive of the Dives.
They from their pinions shake
The sweetness of celestial flowers,
And, as her enemies impure
From that impervious poison far away
Fly groaning with the torment, she the while
Inhales her fragrant food.

23

Such odours flow'd upon the world,
When at Mohammed's nuptials, word
Went forth in Heaven, to roll
The everlasting gates of Paradise
Back on their living hinges, that its gales
Might visit all below; the general bliss
Thrill'd every bosom, and the family
Of man, for once, partook one common joy.

24

Full of the bliss, yet still awake
To wonder, on went Thalaba;
On every side the song of mirth,
The music of festivity,
Invite the passing youth.
Wearied at length with hunger and with heat,
He enters in a banquet room,
Where round a fountain brink,
On silken carpets sate the festive train.
Instant through all his frame
Delightful coolness spread;
The playing fount refresh'd
The agitated air;
The very light came cool'd through silvering panes [tinged;
Of pearly shell, like the pale moon-beam
Or where the wine-vase fill'd the aperture,
Rosy as rising morn, or softer gleam
Of saffron, like the sunny evening mist:
Through every hue, and streak'd by all,
The flowing fountain play'd.
Around the water-edge
Vessels of wine, alternate placed,
Ruby and amber, tinged its little waves.
From golden goblets there
The guests sate quaffing the delicious juice
Of Shiraz' golden grape.

25

But Thalaba took not the draught;
For rightly he knew had the Prophet forbidden
That beverage, the mother of sins.
Nor did the urgent guests
Proffer a second time the liquid fire,
When in the youth's strong eye they saw
No moveable resolve.
Yet not uncourteous, Thalaba
Drank the cool draught of innocence,
That fragrant from its dewy vase
Came purer than it left its native bed;
And he partook the odorous fruits,
For all rich fruits were there;
Water-melons rough of rind,
Whose pulp the thirsty lip
Dissolved into a draught;
Pistachios from the heavy-cluster'd trees
Of Malavert, or Haleb's fertile soil;
And Casbin's luscious grapes of amber hue,
That many a week endure
The summer sun intense,
Till by its powerful heat
All watery particles exhaled, alone
The strong essential sweetness ripens there.
Here cased in ice the apricot,
A topaz, crystal-set:
Here, on a plate of snow,
The sunny orange rests;
And still the aloes and the sandal-wood,
From golden censers, o'er the banquet room
Diffuse their dying sweets.

26

Anon a troop of females form'd the dance,
Their ankles bound with bracelet-bells,
That made the modulating harmony.
Transparent garments to the greedy eye
Exposed their harlot limbs,
Which moved, in every wanton gesture skill'd.

27

With earnest eyes the banqueters
Fed on the sight impure;
And Thalaba, he gazed,
But in his heart he bore a talisman,
Whose blessed alchemy
To virtuous thoughts refined
The loose suggestions of the scene impure.
Oneiza's image swam before his sight,
His own Arabian Maid.
He rose, and from the banquet room he rush'd,
Tears coursed his burning cheek;

And nature for a moment woke the thought,
And murmur'd, that, from all domestic joys
Estranged, he wander'd o'er the world
A lonely being, far from all he loved.
Son of Hodeirah, not among thy crimes
That momentary murmur shall be written!

28

From tents of revelry,
From festal bowers, to solitude he ran;
And now he came where all the rills
Of that well-water'd garden in one tide
Roll'd their collected waves.
A straight and stately bridge
Stretch'd its long arches o'er the ample stream.
Strong in the evening and distinct its shade
Lay on the watery mirror, and his eye
Saw it united with its parent pile,
One huge fantastic fabric. Drawing near,
Loud from the chambers of the bridge below,
Sounds of carousal came and song,
And unveil'd women bade the advancing youth
Come merry-make with them!
Unhearing, or unheeding, he
Pass'd o'er with hurried pace,
And sought the shade and silence of the grove.

29

Deserts of Araby!
His soul return'd to you.
He cast himself upon the earth,
And closed his eyes and call'd
The voluntary vision up.
A cry, as of distress,
Aroused him; loud it came and near!
He started up, he strung his bow,
He pluck'd an arrow forth.
Again a shriek . . a woman's shriek!
And lo! she rushes through the trees,
Her veil is rent, her garments torn!
The ravisher follows close.
'Prophet, save me! save me, God!
Help! help me, man!' to Thalaba she cried;
Thalaba drew the bow.
The unerring arrow did its work of death.
Then turning to the woman, he beheld
His own Oneiza, his Arabian Maid.

THE SEVENTH BOOK

Now all is done; bring home the Bride again,
Bring home the triumph of our victory!
Bring home with you the glory of her gain,
With joyance bring her, and with jollity.
Never had man more joyful day than this,
Whom Heaven would heap with bliss.
SPENSER, *Epithalamium.*

1

FROM fear, and from amazement, and from joy,
At length the Arabian Maid recovering speech,
Threw around Thalaba her arms, and cried,
'My father! O my father!' . . Thalaba
In wonder lost, yet fearing to enquire,
Bent down his cheek on hers,
And their tears met, and mingled as they fell.

2

ONEIZA

At night they seized me, Thalaba! in my sleep; . .
Thou wert not near, . . and yet when in their grasp
I woke, my shriek of terror called on thee.
My father could not save me, . . an old man! [my God,
And they were strong and many: . . O
The hearts they must have had to hear his prayers,
And yet to leave him childless!

THALABA

We will seek him ;
We will return to Araby.

ONEIZA

Alas !
We should not find him, Thalaba ! Our tent
Is desolate ! the wind hath heap'd the sands [is left
Within its door ; the lizard's track
Fresh on the untrodden dust ; prowling by night
The tiger, as he passes, hears no breath
Of man, and turns to search the vacancy.
Alas ! he strays a wretched wanderer
Seeking his child ! old man, he will not rest, . .
He cannot rest, . . his sleep is misery, . .
His dreams are of my wretchedness, my wrongs.
O Thalaba ! this is a wicked place !
Let us be gone !

THALABA

But how to pass again
The iron doors that opening at a breath
Gave easy entrance ? armies in their might
Would fail to move those hinges for return.

ONEIZA

But we can climb the mountains that shut in
This dreadful garden.

THALABA

Are Oneiza's limbs
Equal to that long toil ?

ONEIZA

Oh I am strong,
Dear Thalaba ! for this . . fear gives me strength,
And you are with me !

3

So she took his hand,
And gently drew him forward, and they went
Toward the mountain chain.

4

It was broad moonlight, and obscure or lost
The garden beauties lay,
But the great boundary rose, distinctly mark'd.
These were no little hills,
No sloping uplands lifting to the sun
Their vineyards, with fresh verdure, and the shade
Of ancient woods, courting the loiterer
To win the easy ascent : stone mountains these,
Desolate rock on rock,
The burthens of the earth,
Whose snowy summits met the morning beam
When night was in the vale, whose feet were fix'd [beheld
In the world's foundations. Thalaba
The heights precipitous,
Impending crags, rocks unascendible,
And summits that had tired the eagle's wing ;
' There is no way ! ' he said ;
Paler Oneiza grew,
And hung upon his arm a feebler weight.

5

But soon again to hope
Revives the Arabian Maid,
As Thalaba imparts the sudden thought.
' I pass'd a river,' cried the youth,
' A full and copious stream.
The flowing waters cannot be restrain'd,
And where they find or force their way,
There we perchance may follow ; thitherward
The current roll'd along.'

So saying, yet again in hope
Quickening their eager steps,
They turn'd them thitherward.

6

Silent and calm the river roll'd along,
And at the verge arrived
Of that fair garden, o'er a rocky bed
Toward the mountain-base,
Still full and silent, held its even way.
But farther as they went its deepening sound
Louder and louder in the distance rose,
As if it forced its stream
Struggling through crags along a narrow pass. [course
And lo! where raving o'er a hollow
The ever-flowing flood
Foams in a thousand whirlpools! There adown
The perforated rock
Plunge the whole waters; so precipitous,
So fathomless a fall,
That their earth-shaking roar came deaden'd up
Like subterranean thunders.

7

'Allah save us!
Oneiza cried; 'there is no path for man
From this accursed place!'
And as she spake, her joints
Were loosen'd, and her knees sunk under her.
'Cheer up, Oneiza!' Thalaba replied;
'Be of good heart. We cannot fly
The dangers of the place,
But we can conquer them!'

8

And the young Arab's soul
Arose within him; 'What is he,' he cried, [delight,
'Who hath prepared this garden of
And wherefore are its snares?'

9

The Arabian Maid replied,
'The Women, when I enter'd, welcomed me
To Paradise, by Aloadin's will
Chosen, like themselves, a Houri of the Earth. [phemies,
They told me, credulous of his blas-
That Aloadin placed them to reward
His faithful servants with the joys of Heaven.
O Thalaba, and all are ready here
To wreak his wicked will, and work all crimes!
How then shall we escape?'

10

'Woe to him!' cried the Appointed, a stern smile
Darkening with stronger shades his countenance;
'Woe to him! he hath laid his toils
To take the Antelope;
The Lion is come in!'

11

She shook her head, 'A Sorcerer he,
And guarded by so many! Thalaba, . .
And thou but one!'

12

He raised his hand to Heaven,
'Is there not God, Oneiza?
I have a Talisman, that, whoso bears,
Him, nor the Earthly, nor the Infernal Powers
Of Evil, can cast down.
Remember, Destiny
Hath mark'd me from mankind!
Now rest in faith, and I will guard thy sleep!'

13

So on a violet bank
The Arabian Maid laid down,
Her soft cheek pillow'd upon moss and flowers.

She lay in silent prayer,
Till prayer had tranquillized her fears,
And sleep fell on her. By her side
Silent sate Thalaba,
And gazed upon the Maid,
And as he gazed, drew in
New courage and intenser faith,
And waited calmly for the eventful day.

14

Loud sung the Lark, the awaken'd Maid
Beheld him twinkling in the morning light,
And wish'd for wings and liberty like his.
The flush of fear inflamed her cheek,
But Thalaba was calm of soul,
Collected for the work.
He ponder'd in his mind
How from Lobaba's breast
His blunted arrow fell.
Aloadin too might wear
Spell perchance of equal power
To blunt the weapon's edge.

15

Beside the river-brink
Grew a young poplar, whose unsteady leaves
Varying their verdure to the gale,
With silver glitter caught
His meditating eye.
Then to Oneiza turn'd the youth,
And gave his father's bow,
And o'er her shoulders slung
The quiver arrow-stored.
'Me other weapon suits,' said he;
'Bear thou the Bow: dear Maid,
The days return upon me, when these shafts, [palm
True to thy guidance, from the lofty
Brought down its cluster, and thy gladden'd eye, [praise.
Exulting, turn'd to seek the voice of
Oh! yet again, Oneiza, we shall share
Our desert-joys!' So saying, to the bank
He moved, and stooping low,
With double grasp, hand below hand, he clench'd,
And from its watery soil
Uptore the poplar trunk.

16

Then off he shook the clotted earth,
And broke away the head
And boughs, and lesser roots;
And lifting it aloft,
Wielded with able sway the massy club.
'Now for this child of Hell!' quoth Thalaba;
'Belike he shall exchange to-day
His dainty Paradise
For other dwelling, and its cups of joy
For the unallayable bitterness
Of Zaccoum's fruit accurst.'

17

With that the Arabian youth and maid
Toward the centre of the garden went.
It chanced that Aloadin had convoked
The garden-habitants,
And with the assembled throng
Oneiza mingled, and the Appointed Youth.
Unmark'd they mingled; or if one
With busier finger to his neighbour notes
The quiver'd Maid, 'Haply,' he says,
'Some daughter of the Homerites,
Or one who yet remembers with delight
Her native tents of Himiar.' 'Nay!' rejoins
His comrade, 'a love-pageant! for the man [club
Mimics with that fierce eye and knotty
Some savage lion-tamer; she forsooth
Must play the heroine of the years of old!'

18

Radiant with gems upon his throne of gold [head
Sate Aloadin; o'er the Sorcerer's
Hover'd a Bird, and in the fragrant air

Waved his wide winnowing wings,
A living canopy.
Large as the hairy Cassowar
Was that o'ershadowing Bird;
So huge his talons, in their grasp
The Eagle would have hung a helpless prey.
His beak was iron, and his plumes
Glitter'd like burnish'd gold,
And his eyes glow'd, as though an inward fire
Shone through a diamond orb.

19

The blinded multitude
Adored the Sorcerer,
And bent the knee before him,
And shouted forth his praise;
'Mighty art thou, the bestower of joy,
The Lord of Paradise!'
Then Aloadin rose and waved his hand.
And they stood mute, and moveless,
In idolizing awe.

20

'Children of Earth,' he said,
'Whom I have guided here
By easier passage than the gate of Death,
The infidel Sultan, to whose lands
My mountains stretch their roots,
Blasphemes and threatens me.
Strong are his armies, many are his guards,
Yet may a dagger find him.
Children of Earth, I tempt ye not
With the vain promise of a bliss unseen,
With tales of a hereafter Heaven,
Whence never Traveller hath return'd!
Have ye not tasted of the cup of joy
That in these groves of happiness
For ever over-mantling tempts
The ever-thirsty lip?
Who is there here that by a deed
Of danger will deserve
The eternal joys of actual Paradise?'

21

'I!' Thalaba exclaim'd;
And springing forward, on the Sorcerer's head
He dash'd his knotty club.

22

Aloadin fell not, though his skull
Was shattered by the blow,
For by some talisman
His miserable life imprison'd still
Dwelt in the body. The astonish'd crowd
Stand motionless with fear,
Expecting to behold
Immediate vengeance from the wrath of Heaven.
And lo! the Bird . . the monster Bird,
Soars up . . then pounces down
To seize on Thalaba!
Now, Oneiza, bend the bow,
Now draw the arrow home! . .
True fled the arrow from Oneiza's hand;
It pierc'd the monster Bird,
It broke the Talisman, . .
Then darkness cover'd all, . .
Earth shook, Heaven thunder'd, and amid the yells
Of evil Spirits perished
The Paradise of Sin.

23

At last the earth was still;
The yelling of the Demons ceased!
Opening the wreck and ruin to their sight,
The darkness roll'd away. Alone in life,
Amid the desolation and the dead,
Stood the Destroyer and the Arabian Maid.
They look'd around, the rocks were rent,
The path was open, late by magic closed;
Awe-struck and silent down the stony glen
They wound their thoughtful way.

24

Amid the vale below
Tents rose, and streamers play'd,
And javelins sparkled to the sun;
And multitudes encamp'd
Swarm'd, far as eye could travel o'er the plain.
There in his war pavilion sate
In council with his Chiefs
The Sultan of the Land.
Before his presence there a Captain led
Oneiza and the Appointed Youth.

25

'Obedient to our Lord's command,' said he, [began
'We pass'd toward the mountains, and
The ascending strait; when suddenly Earth shook,
And darkness, like the midnight, fell around,
And fire and thunder came from Heaven,
As though the Retribution-day were come.
After the terror ceased, and when with hearts [on,
Somewhat assured, again we ventured
This youth and woman met us on the way.
They told us, that from Aloadin's hold
They came, on whom the judgement stroke hath fallen,
He and his sinful Paradise at once
Destroy'd by them, the agents they of Heaven. [repeat
Therefore I brought them hither to
The tale before thy presence; that as search
Shall prove it false or faithful, to their merit
Thou mayest reward them.'
'Be it done to us,'
Thalaba answer'd, 'as the truth shall prove!'

26

The Sultan while he spake
Fix'd on him the proud eye of sovereignty;
'If thou hast play'd with us,
By Allah and by Ali, Death shall seal
The lying lips for ever! But if the thing
Be as thou say'st, Arabian, thou shalt stand
Next to ourself!' . .
Hark! while he speaks, the cry,
The lengthening cry, the increasing shout
Of joyful multitudes!
Breathless and panting to the tent
The bearer of good tidings comes,
'O Sultan, live for ever! be thy foes
Like Aloadin all!
The wrath of God hath smitten him.'

27

Joy at the welcome tale
Shone in the Sultan's cheek;
'Array the Arabian in the robe
Of honour,' he exclaim'd,
'And place a chain of gold around his neck,
And bind around his brow the diadem,
And mount him on my steed of state,
And lead him through the camp,
And let the Heralds go before and cry,
Thus shall the Sultan reward
The man who serves him well!'

28

Then in the purple robe
They vested Thalaba,
And hung around his neck the golden chain,
And bound his forehead with the diadem,
And on the royal steed
They led him through the camp,
And Heralds went before and cried,
'Thus shall the Sultan reward
The man who serves him well!'

29

When from the pomp of triumph
And presence of the King,
Thalaba sought the tent allotted him,
Thoughtful the Arabian Maid beheld
His animated eye,
His cheek inflamed with pride.
'Oneiza!' cried the youth,
'The King hath done according to his word,
And made me in the land
Next to himself be named! . .
But why that serious melancholy smile?
Oneiza, when I heard the voice that gave me
Honour, and wealth, and fame, the instant thought
Arose to fill my joy, that thou would'st hear
The tidings, and be happy.'

ONEIZA

Thalaba,
Thou would'st not have me mirthful!
Am I not
An orphan, . . among strangers?

THALABA

But with me!

ONEIZA

My Father! . .

THALABA

Nay, be comforted! Last night
To what wert thou exposed! in what a peril
The morning found us! . . safety, honour,
These now are ours. This instant who thou wert
The Sultan ask'd. I told him from our childhood
We had been plighted; . . was I wrong, Oneiza?
And when he said with bounties he would heap
Our nuptials, . . wilt thou blame me if I blest
His will, that bade me fix the marriage day! . .
In tears, my love? . .

ONEIZA

Remember, Destiny
Hath mark'd thee from mankind!

THALABA

Perhaps when Aloadin was destroy'd
The mission ceased; and therefore Providence
With its rewards and blessings strews my path
Thus for the accomplished service.

ONEIZA

Thalaba!

THALABA

Or if haply not, yet whither should I go?
Is it not prudent to abide in peace
Till I am summon'd?

ONEIZA

Take me to the Deserts!

THALABA

But Moath is not there; and would'st thou dwell
In a stranger's tent? thy father then might seek
In long and fruitless wandering for his child.

ONEIZA

Take me then to Mecca!
There let me dwell a servant of the Temple.
Bind thou thyself my veil, . . to human eye
It never shall be lifted. There, whilst thou
Shalt go upon thine enterprize, my prayers,
Dear Thalaba! shall rise to succour thee,
And I shall live, . . if not in happiness,
Surely in hope.

THALABA

Oh think of better things!
The will of Heaven is plain! by wondrous ways
It led us here, and soon the common voice

Will tell what we have done, and how
we dwell
Under the shadow of the Sultan's wing;
So shall thy father hear the fame, and
find us [tears!
What he hath wish'd us ever . . Still in
Still that unwilling eye! nay . . nay . .
Oneiza . .
I dare not leave thee other than my
own, . .
My wedded wife. Honour and gratitude
As yet preserve the Sultan from all
thoughts
That sin against thee; but so sure as
Heaven
Hath gifted thee above all other maids
With loveliness, so surely would those
thoughts
Of wrong arise within the heart of Power.
If thou art mine, Oneiza, we are safe,
But else, there is no sanctuary could
save.

ONEIZA

Thalaba! Thalaba!

30

With song, with music, and with dance,
The bridal pomp proceeds.
Following the deep-veil'd Bride
Fifty female slaves attend
In costly robes that gleam
With interwoven gold,
And sparkle far with gems.
An hundred slaves behind them bear
Vessels of silver and vessels of gold,
And many a gorgeous garment gay,
The presents that the Sultan gave.
On either hand the pages go
With torches flaring through the gloom,
And trump and timbrel merriment
Accompanies their way;
And multitudes with loud acclaim
Shout blessings on the Bride.
And now they reach the palace pile,
The palace home of Thalaba,
And now the marriage feast is spread,
And from the finish'd banquet now
The wedding guests are gone.

31

Who comes from the bridal chamber? . .
It is Azrael, the Angel of Death.

THE EIGHTH BOOK

Quas potius decuit nostro te inferre sepulchro,
Petronilla, tibi spargimus has lacrimas.
Spargimus has lacrimas moesti monumenta parentis,—
Et tibi pro thalamo sternimus hunc tumulum.
Sperabam genitor taedas praeferre jugales,
Et titulo patris jungere nomen avi;
Heu! gener est Orcus; quique, O dulcissima! per te
Se sperabat avum, desinit esse pater.
Joach. Bellaius.

1

WOMAN

Go not among the tombs, Old Man!
There is a madman there.

OLD MAN

Will he harm me if I go?

WOMAN

Not he, poor miserable man!
But 'tis a wretched sight to see
His utter wretchedness.
For all day long he lies on a grave,
And never is he seen to weep,
And never is he heard to groan,
Nor ever at the hour of prayer
Bends his knee nor moves his lips.
I have taken him food for charity,
And never a word he spake:
But yet so ghastly he look'd,
That I have awaken'd at night
With the dream of his ghastly eyes.
Now, go not among the Tombs, Old Man!

OLD MAN

Wherefore has the wrath of God
So sorely stricken him?

WOMAN

He came a stranger to the land,
And did good service to the Sultan,
And well his service was rewarded.
The Sultan named him next himself,
And gave a palace for his dwelling,
And dower'd his bride with rich domains.
But on his wedding night
There came the Angel of Death.
Since that hour, a man distracted
Among the sepulchres he wanders.
The Sultan, when he heard the tale,
Said that for some untold crime
Judgement thus had stricken him,
And asking Heaven forgiveness
That he had shown him favour,
Abandon'd him to want.

OLD MAN

A Stranger did you say ?

WOMAN

An Arab born, like you.
But go not among the Tombs,
For the sight of his wretchedness
Might make a hard heart ache !

OLD MAN

Nay, nay, I never yet have shunn'd
A countryman in distress !
And the sound of his dear native tongue
May be like the voice of a friend.

2

Then to the Sepulchre
Whereto she pointed him,
Old Moath bent his way.
By the tomb lay Thalaba,
In the light of the setting eve ;
The sun, and the wind, and the rain,
Had rusted his raven locks ;
His cheeks were fallen in,
His face-bones prominent ;
Reclined against the tomb he lay,
And his lean fingers play'd,
Unwitting, with the grass that grew beside.

3

The Old Man knew him not,
But drawing near him, said,
' Countryman, peace be with thee ! '
The sound of his dear native tongue
Awaken'd Thalaba ;
He raised his countenance,
And saw the good Old Man,
And he arose and fell upon his neck,
And groan'd in bitterness.
Then Moath knew the youth,
And fear'd that he was childless ; and he turned
His asking eyes, and pointed to the tomb.
' Old Man ! ' cried Thalaba,
' Thy search is ended here ! '

4

The father's cheek grew white,
And his lip quiver'd with the misery ;
Howbeit, collectedly, with painful voice
He answer'd, ' God is good ! His will be done ! '

5

The woe in which he spake,
The resignation that inspired his speech,
They soften'd Thalaba.
'Thou hast a solace in thy grief,' he cried,
' A comforter within !
Moath ! thou seest me here,
Deliver'd to the Evil Powers,
A God-abandon'd wretch.'

6

The Old Man look'd at him incredulous.
' Nightly,' the youth pursued,
' Thy daughter comes to drive me to despair.
Moath, thou thinkest me mad ;
But when the Cryer from the Minaret
Proclaims the midnight hour,
Hast thou a heart to see her ? '

7

In the Meidan now
The clang of clarions and of drums
Accompanied the Sun's descent.
'Dost thou not pray, my son?'
Said Moath, as he saw
The white flag waving on the neighbouring Mosque:
Then Thalaba's eye grew wild,
'Pray!' echoed he; 'I must not pray!'
And the hollow groan he gave
Went to the Old Man's heart.
And bowing down his face to earth,
In fervent agony he call'd on God.

8

A night of darkness and of storms!
Into the Chamber of the Tomb
Thalaba led the Old Man,
To roof him from the rain.
A night of storms! the wind
Swept through the moonless sky,
And moan'd among the pillar'd sepulchres;
And in the pauses of its sweep
They heard the heavy rain
Beat on the monument above.
In silence on Oneiza's grave
Her Father and her husband sate.

9

The Cryer from the Minaret
Proclaim'd the midnight hour.
'Now, now!' cried Thalaba;
And o'er the chamber of the tomb
There spread a lurid gleam,
Like the reflection of a sulphur fire;
And in that hideous light
Oneiza stood before them. It was She,..
Her very lineaments,.. and such as death
Had changed them, livid cheeks, and lips of blue;
But in her eyes there dwelt
Brightness more terrible
Than all the loathsomeness of death.
'Still art thou living, wretch?'
In hollow tones she cried to Thalaba;
'And must I nightly leave my grave
To tell thee, still in vain,
God hath abandon'd thee?'

10

'This is not she!' the Old Man exclaim'd;
'A Fiend; a manifest Fiend!'
And to the youth he held his lance;
'Strike, and deliver thyself!'
'Strike HER!' cried Thalaba,
And, palsied of all power,
Gazed fixedly upon the dreadful form.
'Yea, strike her!' cried a voice, whose tones
Flow'd with such sudden healing through his soul,
As when the desert shower
From death deliver'd him;
But unobedient to that well-known voice,
His eye was seeking it,
When Moath, firm of heart,
Perform'd the bidding: through the vampire corpse
He thrust his lance; it fell,
And howling with the wound,
Its fiendish tenant fled.
A sapphire light fell on them,
And garmented with glory, in their sight
Oneiza's Spirit stood.

11

'O Thalaba!' she cried,
'Abandon not thyself!
Would'st thou for ever lose me?.. O my husband,
Go and fulfil thy quest,
That in the Bowers of Paradise
I may not look for thee
In vain, nor wait thee long.'

12

To Moath then the Spirit
Turn'd the dark lustre of her heavenly eyes:

'Short is thy destined path,
O my dear Father! to the abode of bliss.
Return to Araby,
There with the thought of death
Comfort thy lonely age,
And Azrael, the Deliverer, soon
Will visit thee in peace.'

13

They stood with earnest eyes,
And arms out-reaching, when again
The darkness closed around them.
The soul of Thalaba revived;
He from the floor his quiver took,
And as he bent the bow, exclaim'd,
'Was it the over-ruling Providence
That in the hour of frenzy led my hands
Instinctively to this? [anew
To-morrow, and the sun shall brace
The slacken'd cord, that now sounds
loose and damp;
To-morrow, and its livelier tone will sing,
In tort vibration to the arrow's flight.
I . . but I also, with recover'd health
Of heart, shall do my duty.
My Father! here I leave thee then!'
he cried,
'And not to meet again,
Till at the gate of Paradise
The eternal union of our joys commence.
We parted last in darkness!' . . and
the youth
Thought with what other hopes;
But now his heart was calm,
For on his soul a heavenly hope had
dawn'd.

14

The Old Man answered nothing, but he
held
His garment, and to the door
Of the Tomb Chamber followed him.
The rain had ceased, the sky was wild,
Its black clouds broken by the storm.
And, lo! it chanced, that in the chasm
Of Heaven between, a star,
Leaving along its path continuous light,
Shot eastward. 'See my guide!' quoth
Thalaba;
And turning, he received
Old Moath's last embrace, [Man.
And the last blessing of the good Old

15

Evening was drawing nigh,
When an old Dervise, sitting in the sun
At his cell door, invited for the night
The traveller; in the sun
He spread the plain repast,
Rice and fresh grapes, and at their feet
there flowed
The brook of which they drank.

16

So as they sate at meal,
With song, with music, and with dance,
A wedding train went by;
The deep-veil'd bride, the female slaves,
The torches of festivity,
And trump and timbrel merriment
Accompanied their way.
The good old Dervise gave
A blessing as they pass'd;
But Thalaba look'd on,
And breathed a low deep groan, and hid
his face. [felt
The Dervise had known sorrow, and he
Compassion; and his words
Of pity and of piety
Open'd the young man's heart,
And he told all his tale.

17

'Repine not, O my Son!' the Old Man
replied,
'That Heaven hath chasten'd thee. Be-
hold this vine,
I found it a wild tree, whose wanton
strength
Had swoln into irregular twigs
And bold excrescences,
And spent itself in leaves and little rings,

So in the flourish of its outwardness
Wasting the sap and strength
That should have given forth fruit.
But when I pruned the plant,
Then it grew temperate in its vain expense [see'st,
Of useless leaves, and knotted, as thou
Into these full clear clusters, to repay
The hand that wisely wounded it.
Repine not, O my Son!
In wisdom and in mercy Heaven inflicts
Its painful remedies.'

18

Then pausing, . . 'Whither goest thou now?' he ask'd.
'I know not,' answered Thalaba;
'My purpose is to hold
Straight on, secure of this,
That travel where I will, I cannot stray,
For Destiny will lead my course aright.'

19

'Far be it from me,' the Old Man replied,
'To shake that pious confidence;
And yet, if knowledge may be gain'd, methinks
Thy course should be to seek it painfully.
In Kaf the Simorg hath his dwelling place, [seen
The all-knowing Bird of Ages, who hath
The World, with all its children, thrice destroy'd.
Long is the path,
And difficult the way, of danger full;
But that unerring Bird
Could to a certain end
Direct thy weary search.'

20

Easy assent the youth
Gave to the words of wisdom; and behold [Kaf.
At dawn, the adventurer on his way to
And he hath travelled many a day,
And many a river swum over,
And many a mountain ridge hath crost,
And many a measureless plain;
And now amid the wilds advanced,
Long is it since his eyes
Have seen the trace of man.

21

Cold! cold! 'tis a chilly clime
That the youth in his journey hath reach'd,
And he is aweary now,
And faint for lack of food.
Cold! cold! there is no Sun in Heaven,
A heavy and uniform cloud
Overspreads the face of the sky,
And the snows are beginning to fall.
Dost thou wish for thy deserts, O Son of Hodeirah?
Dost thou long for the gales of Arabia?
Cold! cold! his blood flows languidly,
His hands are red, his lips are blue,
His feet are sore with the frost.
Cheer thee! cheer thee! Thalaba!
A little yet bear up!

22

All waste! no sign of life
But the track of the wolf and the bear!
No sound but the wild, wild wind,
And the snow crunching under his feet!
Night is come; neither moon, nor stars,
Only the light of the snow!
But behold a fire in a cave of the hill,
A heart-reviving fire;
And thither with strength renew'd
Thalaba presses on.

23

He found a Woman in the cave,
A solitary Woman,
Who by the fire was spinning,
And singing as she spun.
The pine boughs were cheerfully blazing,
And her face was bright with the flame;
Her face was as a Damsel's face,

And yet her hair was grey.
She bade him welcome with a smile,
And still continued spinning,
And singing as she spun.
The thread the woman drew
Was finer than the silkworm's,
Was finer than the gossamer;
The song she sung was low and sweet,
But Thalaba knew not the words.

24

He laid his bow before the hearth,
For the string was frozen stiff;
He took the quiver from his neck,
For the arrow-plumes were iced.
Then as the cheerful fire
Revived his languid limbs,
The adventurer ask'd for food.
The Woman answer'd him,
And still her speech was song:
'The She Bear she dwells near to me,
And she hath cubs, one, two, and three;
She hunts the deer, and brings him here,
And then with her I make good cheer;
And now to the chase the She Bear is gone,
And she with her prey will be here anon.'

25

She ceased her spinning while she spake;
And when she had answer'd him,
Again her fingers twirl'd the thread,
And again the Woman began,
In low, sweet tones to sing
The unintelligible song.

26

The thread she spun it gleam'd like gold
In the light of the odorous fire,
Yet was it so wondrously thin,
That, save when it shone in the light,
You might look for it closely in vain.
The youth sate watching it,
And she observed his wonder,
And then again she spake,
And still her speech was song;
'Now twine it round thy hands I say,
Now twine it round thy hands I pray!
My thread is small, my thread is fine,
But he must be
A stronger than thee,
Who can break this thread of mine!'

27

And up she raised her bright blue eyes,
And sweetly she smiled on him,
And he conceived no ill;
And round and round his right hand,
And round and round his left,
He wound the thread so fine.
And then again the Woman spake,
And still her speech was song,
'Now thy strength, O Stranger, strain!
Now then break the slender chain.'

28

Thalaba strove, but the thread
By magic hands was spun,
And in his cheek the flush of shame
Arose, commixt with fear.
She beheld and laugh'd at him
And then again she sung,
'My thread is small, my thread is fine,
But he must be
A stronger than thee,
Who can break this thread of mine!'

29

And up she raised her bright blue eyes,
And fiercely she smiled on him:
'I thank thee, I thank thee, Hodeirah's son!
I thank thee for doing what can't be undone,
For binding thyself in the chain I have spun!'
Then from his head she wrench'd
A lock of his raven hair,
And cast it in the fire,
And cried aloud as it burnt,
'Sister! Sister! hear my voice!
Sister! Sister! come and rejoice!
The thread is spun,

The prize is won,
The work is done,
For I have made captive Hodeirah's Son.'

30

Borne in her magic car
The Sister Sorceress came,
Khawla, the fiercest of the Sorcerer brood.
She gazed upon the youth,
She bade him break the slender thread,
She laugh'd aloud for scorn,
She clapt her hands for joy.

31

The She Bear from the chase came in,
She bore the prey in her bloody mouth,
She laid it at Maimuna's feet,
And then look'd up with wistful eyes
As if to ask her share.
'There! there!' quoth Maimuna,
And pointing to the prisoner-youth,
She spurn'd him with her foot,
And bade her make her meal.
But then their mockery fail'd them,
And anger and shame arose;
For the She Bear fawn'd on Thalaba,
And quietly lick'd his hand.

32

The grey-hair'd Sorceress stampt the ground,
And call'd a Spirit up;
'Shall we bear the Enemy
To the dungeon dens below?'

SPIRIT

Woe! woe! to our Empire woe!
If ever he tread the caverns below.

MAIMUNA

Shall we leave him fetter'd here
With hunger and cold to die?

SPIRIT

Away from thy lonely dwelling fly!
Here I see a danger nigh,
That he should live and thou should'st die.

MAIMUNA

Whither then must we bear the foe?

SPIRIT

To Mohareb's island go,
There shalt thou secure the foe,
There prevent thy future woe.

33

Then in the Car they threw
The fetter'd Thalaba,
And took their seats, and set
Their feet upon his neck;
Maimuna held the reins,
And Khawla shook the scourge,
And away! away! away!

34

They were no steeds of mortal race
That drew the magic car
With the swiftness of feet and of wings.
The snow-dust rises behind them,
The ice-rock's splinters fly,
And hark in the valley below
The sound of their chariot wheels. . .
And they are far over the mountains!
Away! away! away!
The Demons of the air
Shout their joy as the Sisters pass,
The Ghosts of the Wicked that wander by night
Flit over the magic car.

35

Away! away! away!
Over the hills and the plains,
Over the rivers and rocks,
Over the sands of the shore;
The waves of ocean heave
Under the magic steeds;
With unwet hoofs they trample the deep,
And now they reach the Island coast,
And away to the city the Monarch's abode.
Open fly the city gates,
Open fly the iron doors,
The doors of the palace-court.
Then stopt the charmed car.

36

The Monarch heard the chariot wheels,
And forth he came to greet
The mistress whom he served.
He knew the captive youth,
And Thalaba beheld
Mohareb in the robes of royalty,
Whom erst his arm had thrust
Down the bitumen pit.

THE NINTH BOOK

Conscience! . .
Poor plodding Priests and preaching Friars may make
Their hollow pulpits and the empty aisles
Of churches ring with that round word: but we,
That draw the subtile and more piercing air
In that sublimed region of a court,
Know all is good we make so, and go on
Secured by the prosperity of our crimes.
B. JONSON, *Mortimer's Fall.*

1

'Go up my Sister Maimuna,
Go up and read the stars!'

2

Lo! on the terrace of the topmost tower
She stands; her darkening eyes,
Her fine face raised to Heaven;
Her white hair flowing like the silver streams
That streak the northern night.

3

They hear her coming tread,
They lift their asking eyes:
Her face is serious, her unwilling lips
Slow to the tale of ill.
'What hast thou read? what hast thou read?'
Quoth Khawla in alarm.
'Danger . . death . . judgement!'
Maimuna replied.

4

'Is that the language of the lights of Heaven?'
Exclaim'd the sterner Witch;
'Creatures of Allah, they perform his will,
And with their lying menaces would daunt
Our credulous folly . . . Maimuna,
I never liked this uncongenial lore!
Better befits to make the Sacrifice
Of Divination; so shall I
Be mine own Oracle.
Command the victims thou, O King!
Male and female they must be,
Thou knowest the needful rites.
Meanwhile I purify the place.'

5

The Sultan went; the Sorceress rose,
And North, and South, and East, and West,
She faced the points of Heaven;
And ever where she turn'd
She laid her hand upon the wall;
And up she look'd, and smote the air,
And down she stoopt, and smote the floor.
'To Eblis and his servants
I consecrate the place;
Let enter none but they!
Whatever hath the breath of life,
Whatever hath the sap of life,
Let it be blasted and die!'

6

Now all is prepared;
Mohareb returns,
The Circle is drawn,
The Victims have bled,
The Youth and the Maid.
She in the circle holds in either hand,
Clench'd by the hair, a head,
The heads of the Youth and the Maid.
'Go out, ye lights!' quoth Khawla,
And in darkness began the spell.

7

With spreading arms she whirls around
Rapidly, rapidly,
Ever around and around;
And loudly she calls the while,
'Eblis! Eblis!'
Loudly, incessantly,
Still she calls, 'Eblis! Eblis!'
Giddily, giddily, still she whirls,
Loudly, incessantly, still she calls;
The motion is ever the same,
Ever around and around;
The calling is still the same,
Still it is, 'Eblis! Eblis!'
Till her voice is a shapeless yell,
And dizzily rolls her brain,
And now she is full of the Fiend.
She stops, she rocks, she reels!
Look! look! she appears in the darkness!
Her flamy hairs curl up
All living, like the Meteor's locks of light!
Her eyes are like the sickly Moon!

8

It is her lips that move,
Her tongue that shapes the sound;
But whose is the Voice that proceeds?..
'Ye may hope and ye may fear,
The danger of his stars is near.
Sultan! if he perish, woe!
Fate hath written one death-blow
For Mohareb and the Foe!
Triumph; triumph! only she
That knit his bonds can set him free.'

9

She spake the Oracle,
And senselessly she fell.
They knelt in care beside her,..
Her Sister and the King;
They sprinkled her palms with water,
They wetted her nostrils with blood.

10

She wakes as from a dream,
She asks the utter'd voice;
But when she heard, an anger and a grief
Darken'd her wrinkling brow.
'Then let him live in long captivity!'
She answer'd: but Mohareb's quicken'd eye
Perused her sullen countenance,
That lied not with the lips.
A miserable man!
What boots it that in central caves,
The Powers of Evil at his Baptism pledged
The Sacrament of Hell?
His death secures them now.
What boots it that they gave
Abdaldar's guardian ring,
When, through another's life,
The blow may reach his own?

11

He sought the dungeon cell
Where Thalaba was laid.
'Twas the grey morning twilight, and the voice
Of Thalaba in prayer [his ear.
With words of hallow'd import smote
The grating of the heavy hinge
Roused not the Arabian youth;
Nor lifted he his earthward face,
At sound of coming feet.
Nor did Mohareb with unholy speech
Disturb the duty: silent, spirit-awed,
Envious, heart-humbled, he beheld
The peace which piety alone can give.

12

When Thalaba, the perfect rite perform'd, [Island-Chief:
Raised his calm eye, then spake the
'Arab! my guidance through the dangerous Cave
Thy service overpaid,

An unintended friend in enmity.
The Hand that caught thy ring
Received and bore me to the scene I sought.
Now know me grateful. I return
That amulet, thy only safety here.'

13

Artful he spake, with show of gratitude
Veiling the selfish deed.
Lock'd in his magic chain,
Thalaba on his passive powerless hand
Received again the Spell.
Remembering then with what an ominous faith
First he drew on the ring,
The youth repeats his words of augury;
'In God's name and the Prophet's! be its power
Good, let it serve the righteous! if for evil,
God and my trust in Him shall hallow it,
Blindly the wicked work
The righteous will of Heaven!'
So Thalaba received again
The written ring of gold.

14

Thoughtful awhile Mohareb stood,
And eyed the captive youth.
Then, building skilfully sophistic speech,
Thus he began. 'Brave art thou, Thalaba! would buy
And wherefore are we foes? . . for I
Thy friendship at a princely price, and make thee
To thine own welfare wise.
Hear me! in Nature are two hostile Gods,
Makers and Masters of existing things,
Equal in power: . . nay, hear me patiently! . .
Equal . . for look around thee! The same Earth Camel finds
Bears fruit and poison; where the
His fragrant food, the horned Viper there
Sucks in the juice of death: the Elements
Now serve the use of man, and now assert
Dominion o'er his weakness: dost thou hear
The sound of merriment and nuptial song? mourner's cry,
From the next house proceeds the
Lamenting o'er the dead. Say'st thou that Sin
Enter'd the world of Allah? that the Fiend,
Permitted for a season, prowls for prey?
When to thy tent the venomous serpent creeps, so,
Dost thou not crush the reptile? Even
Be sure, had Allah crush'd his Enemy,
But that the power was wanting. From the first,
Eternal as themselves their warfare is;
To the end it must endure. Evil and Good . . the strife
What are they, Thalaba, but words? in
Of Angels, as of Men, the weak are guilty;
Power must decide. The Spirits of the Dead
Quitting their mortal mansion, enter not, seat
As falsely ye are preach'd, their final
Of bliss, or bale; nor in the sepulchre
Sleep they the long, long sleep: each joins the host
Of his great leader, aiding in the war
Whose fate involves his own.
Woe to the vanquish'd then!
Woe to the sons of man who follow'd him! eternity,
They, with their Leader, through
Must howl in central fires.
Thou, Thalaba, hast chosen ill thy part,
If choice it may be call'd, where will was not,
Nor searching doubt, nor judgement wise to weigh.

Hard is the service of the Power,
beneath [discipline
Whose banners thou wert born; his
Severe, yea cruel; and his wages, rich
Only in promise; who hath seen the
pay? [ours,
For us . . the pleasures of the world are
Riches and rule, the kingdoms of the
Earth.
We met in Babylon adventurers both,
Each zealous for the hostile Power
he served: [art,
We meet again; thou feelest what thou
Thou seest what I am, the Sultan here,
The Lord of Life and Death.
Abandon him who has abandon'd thee,
And be, as I am, great among
mankind!'

15

The Captive did not, hasty to confute,
Break off that subtle speech;
But when the expectant silence of the
King
Look'd for his answer, then spake
Thalaba.
'And this then is thy faith! this mon-
strous creed! [Stars,
This lie against the Sun, and Moon, and
And Earth, and Heaven! Blind man,
who canst not see
How all things work the best! who
wilt not know, [whate'er
That in the Manhood of the World,
Of folly mark'd its Infancy, of vice
Sullied its Youth, ripe Wisdom shall
cast off, [safe.
Stablish'd in good, and, knowing evil,
Sultan Mohareb, yes, ye have me here
In chains; but not forsaken, though
opprest;
Cast down, but not destroy'd. Shall
danger daunt,
Shall death dismay his soul, whose life
is given
For God, and for his brethren of man-
kind?
Alike rewarded, in that holy cause,
The Conqueror's and the Martyr's palm
above [my blood
Beam with one glory. Hope ye that
Can quench the dreaded flame? and
know ye not, [and Wise,
That leagued against ye are the Just
And all Good Actions of all ages past,
Yea, your own crimes, and Truth, and
God in Heaven?'

16

'Slave!' quoth Mohareb, and his lip
Quiver'd with eager wrath,
'I have thee! thou shalt feel my power,
And in thy dungeon loathsomeness
Rot piece-meal, limb from limb!'
And out the Tyrant rushes,
And all impatient of the thoughts
That canker'd in his heart,
Seeks in the giddiness of boisterous
sport
Short respite from the avenging power
within.

17

What Woman is she
So wrinkled and old,
That goes to the wood?
She leans on her staff
With a tottering step,
She tells her bead-string slow
Through fingers dull'd by age.
The wanton boys bemock her;
The babe in arms that meets her
Turns round with quick affright
And clings to his nurse's neck.

18

Hark! hark! the hunter's cry;
Mohareb has gone to the chase.
The dogs, with eager yelp,
Are struggling to be free;
The hawks in frequent stoop

Token their haste for flight;
And couchant on the saddle-bow,
With tranquil eyes and talons sheathed,
The ounce expects his liberty.

19

Propt on the staff that shakes
Beneath her trembling weight,
The Old Woman sees them pass.
Halloa! halloa!
The game is up!
The dogs are loosed,
The deer bounds over the plain:
The dogs pursue
Far, far behind
Though at full stretch,
With eager speed,
Far, far behind.
But lo! the Falcon o'er his head
Hovers with hostile wings,
And buffets him with blinding strokes!
Dizzy with the deafening strokes
In blind and interrupted course,
Poor beast, he struggles on;
And now the dogs are nigh!
How his heart pants! you see
The panting of his heart;
And tears like human tears
Roll down, along the big veins fever-swoln;
And now the death-sweat darkens his dun hide;
His fear, his groans, his agony, his death,
Are the sport, and the joy, and the triumph!

20

Halloa! another prey,
The nimble Antelope!
The ounce is freed; one spring,
And his talons are sheathed in her shoulders,
And his teeth are red in her gore.
There came a sound from the wood,
Like the howl of the winter wind at night,
Around a lonely dwelling;
The ounce, whose gums were warm in his prey,
He hears the summoning sound.
In vain his master's voice,
No longer dreaded now,
Calls and recalls with threatful tone;
Away to the forest he goes;
For that Old Woman had laid [lips,
Her shrivell'd finger on her shrivell'd
And whistled with a long, long breath;
And that long breath was the sound
Like the howl of the winter wind at night,
Around a lonely dwelling.

21

Mohareb knew her not,
As to the chase he went,
The glance of his proud eye
Passing in scorn o'er age and wretchedness.
She stands in the depth of the wood.
And panting to her feet,
Fawning and fearful, creeps
The ounce by charms constrain'd.
Well may'st thou fear, and vainly dost thou fawn!
Her form is changed, her visage new,
Her power, her art the same!
It is Khawla that stands in the wood.

22

She knew the place where the Mandrake grew,
And round the neck of the ounce,
And round the Mandrake's head,
She tightens the ends of her cord.
Her ears are closed with wax,
And her prest finger fastens them,
Deaf as the Adder, when, with grounded head,
And circled form, both avenues of sound
Barr'd safely, one slant eye
Watches the charmer's lips
Waste on the wind his baffled witchery,
The spotted ounce so beautiful,

Springs forceful from the scourge;
With that the dying plant all agony,
Feeling its life-strings crack,
Utter'd the unimaginable groan
That none can hear and live.

23

Then from her victim servant Khawla loosed [hand,
The precious poison. Next with naked
She pluck'd the boughs of the manchineel;
And of the wormy wax she took,
That, from the perforated tree forced out,
Bewray'd its insect-parent's work within.

24

In a cavern of the wood she sits,
And moulds the wax to human form;
And, as her fingers kneaded it,
By magic accents, to the mystic shape,
Imparted with the life of Thalaba,
In all its passive powers,
Mysterious sympathy.
With the mandrake and the manchineel
She builds her pile accurst.
She lays her finger to the pile,
And blue and green the flesh
Glows with emitted fire,
A fire to kindle that strange fuel meet.

25

Before the fire she placed the imaged wax: [cried,
'There, waste away!' the Enchantress
'And with thee waste Hodeirah's Son!'

26

Fool! fool! go thaw the everlasting ice,
Whose polar mountains bound the human reign.
Blindly the wicked work
The righteous will of Heaven!
The doom'd Destroyer wears Abdaldar's ring;
Against the danger of his horoscope
Yourselves have shielded him;
And on the sympathizing wax,
The unadmitted flames play powerlessly, [snow.
As the cold moon-beam on a plain of

27

'Curse thee! curse thee!' cried the fiendly woman,
'Hast thou yet a spell of safety?'
And in the raging flames
She threw the imaged wax.
It lay amid the flames,
Like Polycarp of old,
When, by the glories of the burning stake
O'er-vaulted, his grey hairs
Curl'd, life-like, to the fire
That haloed round his saintly brow.

28

'Wherefore is this!' cried Khawla, and she stampt
Thrice on the cavern floor:
'Maimuna! Maimuna!'
Thrice on the floor she stampt,
Then to the rocky gateway glanced
Her eager eyes, and Maimuna was there.
'Nay, Sister, nay!' quoth she, 'Mohareb's life
Is link'd with Thalaba's!
Nay, Sister, nay! the plighted oath!
The common sacrament!'

29

'Idiot!' said Khawla, 'one must die, or all!
Faith kept with him were treason to the rest.
Why lies the wax like marble in the fire?
What powerful amulet
Protects Hodeirah's Son?'

30

Cold, marble-cold, the wax
Lay on the raging pile,
Cold in that white intensity of fire.

The Bat, that with her hook'd and leathery wings
Clung to the cave-roof, loosed her hold,
Death-sickening with the heat;
The Toad, which to the darkest nook had crawl'd,
Panted fast with fever pain;
The Viper from her nest came forth,
Leading her quicken'd brood,
That, sportive with the warm delight, roll'd out
Their thin curls, tender as the tendril
Ere the green beauty of their brittle youth
Grows brown, and toughens in the summer sun.
Cold, marble-cold, the wax
Lay on the raging pile,
The silver quivering of the element
O'er its pale surface shedding a dim gloss.

31

Amid the red and fiery smoke,
Watching the portent strange,
The blue-eyed Sorceress and her Sister stood,
Seeming a ruined Angel by the side
Of Spirit born in hell.
Maimuna raised at length her thoughtful eyes:
'Whence, Sister, was the wax?
The work of the worm, or the bee?
Nay then I marvel not!
It were as wise to bring from Ararat
The fore-world's wood to build the magic pile,
And feed it from the balm bower, through whose veins
The Martyr's blood sends such a virtue out
That the fond mother from beneath its shade
Wreathes the horn'd viper round her playful child.
This is the eternal, universal strife!
There is a Grave-wax, . . I have seen the Gouls
Fight for the dainty at their banqueting.'

32

'Excellent Witch!' quoth Khawla and she went
To the cave-arch of entrance, and scowl'd up,
Mocking the blessed Sun:
'Shine thou in Heaven, but I will shadow Earth!
Thou wilt not shorten day,
But I will hasten darkness!' Then the Witch
Began a magic song,
One long low tone, through teeth half-closed,
Through lips slow-moving, muttered
One long-continued breath,
Till to her eyes a darker yellowness
Was driven, and fuller-swoln the prominent veins
On her loose throat grew black.
Then looking upward, thrice she breathed
Into the face of Heaven;
The baneful breath infected Heaven;
A mildewing fog it spread
Darker and darker; so the evening sun
Pour'd his unentering glory on the mist,
And it was night below.

33

'Bring now the wax,' quoth Khawla, 'for thou know'st
The mine that yields it.' Forth went Maimuna,
In mist and darkness went the Sorceress
And she hath reach'd the Place of Tombs,
And in their sepulchres the Dead
Feel feet unholy trampling over them.

34

Thou startest, Maimuna,
Because the breeze is in thy lifted locks!
Is Khawla's spell so weak?
Sudden came the breeze and strong;
The heavy mist wherewith the lungs oppress

Were labouring late, flies now before the gale,
Thin as an infant's breath,
Seen in the sunshine of an autumn frost.
Sudden it came, and soon its work was done,
And suddenly it ceased;
Cloudless and calm it left the firmament,
And beautiful in the blue sky
Arose the summer Moon.

35

She heard the quicken'd action of her blood,
She felt the fever in her cheeks.
Daunted, yet desperate, in a tomb
Entering, with impious hand she traced
Circles and squares and trines
And magic characters,
Till, riven by her charms, the tomb
Yawn'd and disclosed its dead;
Maimuna's eyes were open'd, and she saw
The secrets of the Grave.

36

There sate a Spirit in the vault,
In shape, in hue, in lineaments, like life;
And by him couch'd, as if intranced,
The hundred-headed Worm that never dies.

37

'Nay, Sorceress! not to-night!' the Spirit cried,
'The flesh in which I sinn'd may rest
From suffering; all things, even I, to-night,
Even the Damn'd, repose!'

38

The flesh of Maimuna
Crept on her bones with terror, and her
Trembled with their trembling weight.
'Only this Sabbath! and at dawn the Worm
Will wake, and this poor flesh must grow to meet
The gnawing of his hundred poison-mouths!
God! God! is there no mercy after death!'

39

Soul-struck, she rush'd away,
She fled the Place of Tombs,
She cast herself upon the earth,
All agony, and tumult, and despair.
And in that wild and desperate agony
Sure Maimuna had died the utter death,
If aught of evil had been possible
On this mysterious night;
For this was that most holy night
When all Created Things adore
The Power that made them; Insects, Beasts, and Birds,
The Water-Dwellers, Herbs, and Trees, and Stones,
Yea, Earth and Ocean, and the infinite Heaven,
With all its Worlds. Man only doth not know
The universal Sabbath, doth not join
With Nature in her homage. Yet the prayer
Flows from the righteous with intenser love,
A holier calm succeeds, and sweeter dreams
Visit the slumbers of the penitent.

40

Therefore on Maimuna the Elements
Shed healing; every breath she drew up balm.
For every flower sent then in incense
Its richest odours; and the song of birds
Now, like the music of the Seraphim,
Enter'd her soul, and now
Made silence aweful by their sudden pause.
It seem'd as if the quiet Moon
Pour'd quietness; its lovely light
Was like the smile of reconciling Heaven.

41

Is it the dew of night
That on her glowing cheek

Shines in the moon-beam ? Oh ! she
weeps . . she weeps !
And the Good Angel that abandoned her
At her hell-baptism, by her tears drawn
down,
Resumes his charge. Then Maimuna
Recall'd to mind the double oracle ;
Quick as the lightning flash
Its import glanced upon her, and the hope
Of pardon and salvation rose,
As now she understood
The lying prophecy of truth.
She pauses not, she ponders not ;
The driven air before her fann'd the face
Of Thalaba, and he awoke and saw
The Sorceress of the Silver Locks.

42

One more permitted spell.
She takes the magic thread.
With the wide eye of wonder, Thalaba
Watches her snowy fingers round and
round,
Unwind the loosening chain.
Again he hears the low sweet voice,
The low sweet voice so musical,
That sure it was not strange,
If in those unintelligible tones
Was more than human potency,
That with such deep and undefined de-
light
Fill'd the surrender'd soul.
The work is done, the song hath ceased ;
He wakes as from a dream of Paradise,
And feels his fetters gone, and with
the burst
Of wondering adoration, praises God.

43

Her charm hath loosed the chain it bound,
But massy walls and iron gates
Confine Hodeirah's Son.
Heard ye not, Genii of the Air, her spell,
That o'er her face there flits
The sudden flush of fear ?
Again her louder lips repeat the charm ;
Her eye is anxious, her cheek pale,
Her pulse plays fast and feeble.
Nay, Maimuna ! thy power hath ceased,
And the wind scatters now
The voice which ruled it late.

44

' Be comforted, my soul ! ' she cried,
her eye [forted !
Brightening with sudden joy, ' be com-
We have burst through the bonds which
bound us down
To utter death ; our covenant with Hell
Is blotted out ! The Lord hath given
me strength !
Great is the Lord, and merciful !
Hear me, ye rebel Spirits ! in the name
Of Allah and the Prophet, hear the spell ! '

45

Groans then were heard, the prison walls
were rent,
The whirlwind wrapt them round, and
forth they flew,
Borne in the chariot of the Winds
abroad.

THE TENTH BOOK

And the Angel that was sent unto me said, Thinkest thou to comprehend the way of the Most High ! . . Then said I, Yea, my Lord. And he answered me, and said, I am sent to shew thee three ways, and to set forth three similitudes before thee ; whereof if thou canst declare me one, I will shew thee also the way that thou desirest to see, and I shall shew thee from whence the wicked heart cometh. And I said, Tell on, my Lord. Then said he unto me, Go thy way, weigh me the weight of the fire, or measure me the blast of the wind, or call me again the day that is past.—*Esdras*, ii. 4.

1

Ere there was time for wonder or for fear,
The way was pass'd, and lo ! again
Amid surrounding snows,
Within the cavern of the Witch they
stand.

2

Then came the weakness of her natural age
At once on Maimuna;
The burthen of her years
Fell on her, and she knew
That her repentance in the sight of God
Had now found favour, and her hour was come.
Her death was like the righteous: 'Turn my face
To Mecca!' in her languid eyes
The joy of certain hope
Lit a last lustre, and in death
A smile was on her cheek.

3

No faithful crowded round her bier,
No tongue reported her good deeds,
For her no mourners wail'd and wept,
No Iman o'er her perfumed corpse
For her soul's health intoned the prayer;
Nor column raised by the way-side
Implored the passing traveller
To say a requiem for the dead.
Thalaba laid her in the snow,
And took his weapons from the hearth,
And then once more the youth began
His weary way of solitude.

4

The breath of the East is in his face,
And it drives the sleet and the snow.
The air is keen, the wind is keen,
His limbs are aching with the cold,
His eyes are aching with the snow,
His very heart is cold,
His spirit chill'd within him. He looks on
If aught of life be near;
But all is sky, and the white wilderness,
And here and there a solitary pine,
Its branches broken by the weight of snow.
His pains abate, his senses, dull
With suffering, cease to suffer.
Languidly, languidly,
Thalaba drags along,
A heavy weight is on his lids,
His limbs move slow for heaviness,
And he full fain would sleep.
Not yet, not yet, O Thalaba,
Thy hour of rest is come!
Not yet may the Destroyer sleep:
The comfortable sleep:
His journey is not over yet,
His course not yet fulfill'd!..
Run thou thy race, O Thalaba!
The prize is at the goal.

5

It was a Cedar-tree
Which woke him from that deadly drowsiness;
Its broad round-spreading branches, when they felt [heaven,
The snow, rose upward in a point to
And standing in their strength erect,
Defied the baffled storm.
He knew the lesson Nature gave,
And he shook off his heaviness,
And hope revived within him.

6

Now sunk the evening sun,
A broad and beamless orb,
Adown the glowing sky;
Through the red light the snow-flakes fell like fire.
Louder grows the biting wind,
And it drifts the dust of the snow.
The snow is clotted in his hair,
The breath of Thalaba
Is iced upon his lips.
He looks around; the darkness,
The dizzy floating of the feathery sky
Close in his narrow view.

7

At length, through the thick atmosphere, a light
Not distant far appears.
He, doubting other wiles of sorcery,

With mingled joy and fear, yet quicken'd step,
Bends thitherward his way.

8

It was a little, lowly dwelling-place,
Amid a garden whose delightful air
Was mild and fragrant as the evening wind
Passing in summer o'er the coffee-groves
Of Yemen, and its blessed bowers of balm.
A fount of Fire that in the centre play'd
Roll'd all around its wondrous rivulets,
And fed the garden with the heat of life.
Every where magic! the Arabian's heart
Yearn'd after human intercourse.
A light; . . the door unclosed! . .
All silent . . he goes in.

9

There lay a Damsel, sleeping on a couch:
His step awoke her, and she gazed at him
With pleased and wondering look,
Fearlessly, like a happy child,
Too innocent to fear.
With words of courtesy
The young intruder spake.
At the sound of his voice, a joy
Kindled her bright black eyes;
She rose and took his hand;
But at the touch the joy forsook her cheek:
'Oh! it is cold!' she cried,
'I thought I should have felt it warm, like mine,
But thou art like the rest!'

10

Thalaba stood mute awhile,
And wondering at her words:
'Cold? Lady!' then he said: 'I have travell'd long
In this cold wilderness,
Till life is well-nigh spent!'

11

LAILA

Art thou a Man, then?

THALABA

Nay . . I did not think
Sorrow and toil could so have alter'd me,
As to seem otherwise.

LAILA

And thou canst be warm
Sometimes? life-warm as I am?

THALABA

Surely, Lady.
As others are, I am, to heat and cold
Subject like all. You see a Traveller,
Bound upon hard adventure, who requests
Only to rest him here to-night, . . to-morrow
He will pursue his way.

LAILA

Oh . . not to-morrow!
Not, like a dream of joy, depart so soon!
And whither wouldst thou go? for all around
Is everlasting winter, ice and snow,
Deserts unpassable of endless frost.

THALABA

He who has led me here, will still sustain me
Through cold and hunger.

12

'Hunger?' Laila cried:
She clapt her lily hands,
And whether from above, or from below,
It came, sight could not see, [food.
So suddenly the floor was spread with

13

LAILA

Why dost thou watch with hesitating eyes [come.
The banquet? 'tis for thee! I bade it

THALABA

Whence came it?

LAILA

Matters it from whence it came ?
My Father sent it : when I call, he hears.
Nay, . . thou hast fabled with me !
and art like
The forms that wait upon my solitude,
Human to eye alone ; . . thy hunger
would not
Question so idly else.

THALABA

I will not eat !
It came by magic ! fool, to think that
aught [here.
But fraud and danger could await me
Let loose my cloak ! . .

LAILA

Begone then, insolent !
Why dost thou stand and gaze upon
me thus ?
Ay ! eye the features well that threaten
thee
With fraud and danger ! in the wilder-
ness [want,
They shall avenge me, . . in the hour of
Rise on thy view, and make thee feel
How innocent I am :
And this remember'd cowardice and
insult, [thy cheek,
With a more painful shame will burn
Than now heats mine in anger !

THALABA

Mark me, Lady !
Many and restless are my enemies ;
My daily paths have been beset with
snares
Till I have learnt suspicion, bitter
sufferings
Teaching the needful vice. If I have
wrong'd you, . . [cence, . .
For yours should be the face of inno-
I pray you pardon me ! In the name
of God
And of his Prophet, I partake your food.

LAILA

Lo, now ! thou wert afraid of sorcery,
And yet hast said a charm !

THALABA

A charm ?

LAILA

And wherefore ? . .
Is it not delicate food ? . . What mean
thy words ?
I have heard many spells, and many
names,
That rule the Genii and the Elements,
But never these.

THALABA

How ! never heard the names
Of God and of the Prophet ?

LAILA

Never . . nay now !
Again that troubled eye ? . . thou art
a strange man,
And wondrous fearful . . . but I must
not twice [pectest still,
Be charged with fraud : If thou sus-
Depart and leave me !

THALABA

And you do not know
The God that made you ?

LAILA

Made me, man ! . . my Father
Made me. He made this dwelling, and
the grove, [morn
And yonder fountain-fire ; and every
He visits me, and takes the snow, and
moulds [into them
Women and men, like thee; and breathes
Motion, and life, and sense, . . but, to
the touch [night closes
They are chilling cold ; and ever when
They melt away again, and leave me
here
Alone and sad. Oh then how I rejoice
When it is day, and my dear Father
comes

And cheers me with kind words and kinder looks!
My dear, dear Father! . . Were it not for him,
I am so weary of this loneliness,
That I should wish I also were of snow,
That I might melt away, and cease to be.

THALABA

And have you always had your dwelling here
Amid this solitude of snow?

LAILA

I think so.
I can remember, with unsteady feet
Tottering from room to room, and finding pleasure
In flowers, and toys, and sweetmeats, things which long
Have lost their power to please; which, when I see them,
Raise only now a melancholy wish,
I were the little trifler once again
Who could be pleased so lightly!

THALABA

Then you know not
Your Father's art?

LAILA

No. I besought him once
To give me power like his, that where he went [head,
I might go with him; but he shook his
And said, it was a power too dearly bought, [tears.
And kiss'd me with the tenderness of

THALABA

And wherefore hath he hidden you thus far
From all the ways of humankind?

LAILA

'Twas fear,
Fatherly fear and love. He read the stars,
And saw a danger in my destiny,
And therefore placed me here amid the snows,
And laid a spell that never human eye,
If foot of man by chance should reach the depth
Of this wide waste, shall see one trace of grove, [fire,
Garden or dwelling-place, or yonder
That thaws and mitigates the frozen sky.
And, more than this, even if the Enemy
Should come, I have a Guardian here.

THALABA

A Guardian?

LAILA

'Twas well, that when my sight unclosed upon thee, [face,
There was no dark suspicion in thy
Else I had called his succour! Wilt thou see him?
But, if a woman can have terrified thee,
How wilt thou bear his unrelaxing brow,
And lifted lightnings?

THALABA

Lead me to him, Lady!

14

She took him by the hand,
And through the porch they pass'd.
Over the garden and the grove
The fountain-streams of fire
Pour'd a broad light like noon:
A broad unnatural light,
Which made the rose's blush of beauty pale, [blaze.
And dimm'd the rich geranium's scarlet
The various verdure of the grove
Wore here one undistinguishable grey,
Chequer'd with blacker shade.
Suddenly Laila stopt,
'I do not think thou art the enemy,'
She said, 'but He will know!
If thou hast meditated wrong,
Stranger, depart in time . .
I would not lead thee to thy death.'

15

She turn'd her gentle eyes
Toward him then with anxious tenderness. [Thalaba,
'So let him pierce my breast,' cried
'If it hide thought to harm you!'

LAILA

'Tis a figure,
Almost I fear to look at! . . yet come on.
'Twill ease me of a heaviness that seems
To sink my heart; and thou may'st dwell here then
In safety; . . for thou shalt not go to-morrow,
Nor on the after, nor the after day,
Nor ever! It was only solitude
Which made my misery here, . .
And now, that I can see a human face,
And hear a human voice . . .
Oh no! thou wilt not leave me!

THALABA

Alas, I must not rest!
The star that ruled at my nativity,
Shone with a strange and blasting influence.
O gentle Lady! I should draw upon you
A killing curse!

LAILA

But I will ask my Father
To save you from all danger; and you know not [I ask,
The wonders he can work; and when
It is not in his power to say me nay.
Perhaps thou know'st the happiness it is
To have a tender Father?

THALABA

He was one, [tainted
Whom, like a loathsome leper, I have
With my contagious destiny. One evening
He kiss'd me as he wont, and laid his hands [slept.
Upon my head, and blest me ere I
His dying groan awoke me, for the Murderer
Had stolen upon our sleep! . . For me was meant
The midnight blow of death; my Father died;
The brother playmates of my infancy,
The baby at the breast, they perish'd all, . . [saved
All in that dreadful hour! . . but I was
To remember and revenge.

16

She answer'd not; for now,
Emerging from the o'er-arch'd avenue,
The finger of her upraised hand
Mark'd where the Guardian of the garden stood.
It was a brazen Image, every limb
And swelling vein and muscle true to life:
The left knee bending on, [hand
The other straight, firm planted, and his
Lifted on high to hurl
The lightning that it grasp'd.

17

When Thalaba approach'd,
The enchanted Image knew Hodeirah's son, [foe.
And hurl'd the lightning at the dreaded
But from Mohareb's hand
Had Thalaba received Abdaldar's Ring.
Blindly the wicked work
The righteous will of Heaven.
Full in his face the lightning-bolt was driven;
The scatter'd fire recoil'd;
Like the flowing of a summer gale he felt
Its ineffectual force;
His countenance was not changed,
Nor a hair of his head was singed.

18

He started, and his glance
Turn'd angrily upon the Maid.
The sight disarm'd suspicion; . . breathless, pale,

Against a tree she stood ;
Her wan lips quivering, and her eyes
Upraised, in silent supplicating fear.

19

Anon she started with a scream of joy,
Seeing her Father there,
And ran and threw her arms around his neck.
'Save me!' she cried, 'the Enemy is
Save me! save me! Okba!'

20

'Okba!' repeats the youth ;
For never since that hour,
When in the tent the Spirit told his name,
Had Thalaba let slip
The memory of his Father's murderer ;
'Okba!' . . and in his hand
He grasp an arrow-shaft,
And he rush'd on to strike him.

21

'Son of Hodeirah!' the Old Man replied,
'My hour is not yet come ;'
And putting forth his hand
Gently he repell'd the Youth.
'My hour is not yet come!
But thou may'st shed this innocent
Maiden's blood ;
That vengeance God allows thee!'

22

Around her Father's neck
Still Laila's hands were clasp'd ;
Her face was turn'd to Thalaba,
A broad light floated o'er its marble paleness,
As the wind waved the fountain fire,
Her large dilated eye, in horror raised,
Watch'd every look and movement of the youth :
'Not upon her,' said he,
'Not upon her, Hodeirah's blood cries out
For vengeance!' and again his lifted arm
Threaten'd the Sorcerer :
Again withheld, it felt
A barrier that no human strength could burst.

23

'Thou dost not aim the blow more eagerly,'
Okba replied, 'than I would rush to meet it!
But that were poor revenge.
O Thalaba, thy God
Wreaks on the innocent head
His vengeance ; . . I must suffer in my child!
Why dost thou pause to strike thy victim? Allah
Permits, . . commands the deed.'

24

'Liar!' quoth Thalaba.
And Laila's wondering eye
Look'd up, all anguish, to her father's face.
'By Allah and the Prophet,' he replied,
'I speak the words of truth.
Misery! misery!
That I must beg mine enemy to speed
The inevitable vengeance now so near!
I read it in her horoscope ;
Her birth-star warn'd me of Hodeirah's race.
I laid a spell, and call'd a Spirit up ;
He answered, one must die,
Laila or Thalaba. . .
Accursed Spirit! even in truth
Giving a lying hope!
Last, I ascended the seventh Heaven,
And on the Everlasting Table there,
In characters of light,
I read her written doom.
The years that it has gnawn me! and the load
Of sin that it has laid upon my soul!
Curse on this hand, that in the only hour
The favouring Stars allow'd,
Reek'd with other blood than thine.
Still dost thou stand and gaze incredulous?
Young man, be merciful, and keep her not
Longer in agony.'

25

Thalaba's unbelieving frown
Scowl'd on the Sorcerer, [heard,
When in the air the rush of wings was
And Azrael stood before them.
In equal terror at the sight,
The Enchanter, the Destroyer stood,
And Laila, the victim Maid.

26

'Son of Hodeirah!' said the Angel of Death,
'The accursed fables not.
When from the Eternal Hand I took
The yearly scroll of Fate,
Her name was written there; . .
Her leaf had wither'd on the Tree of Life.
This is the hour, and from thy hands
Commission'd to receive the Maid
I come.'

27

'Hear me, O Angel!' Thalaba replied;
'To avenge my father's death,
To work the will of Heaven, [race,
To root from earth the accursed sorcerer
I have dared danger undismay'd,
I have lost all my soul held dear,
I am cut off from all the ties of life,
Unmurmuring. For whate'er awaits me still,
Pursuing to the end the enterprize,
Peril or pain, I bear a ready heart.
But strike this Maid! this innocent! . .
Angel, I dare not do it.'

28

'Remember,' answer'd Azrael, 'all thou say'st [word
Is written down for judgement! every
In the balance of thy trial must be weigh'd!'

29

'So be it!' said the Youth:
'He who can read the secrets of the heart,
Will judge with righteousness!
This is no doubtful path;
The voice of God within me cannot lie. . .
I will not harm the innocent.'

30

He said, and from above,
As though it were the Voice of Night,
The startling answer came.
'Son of Hodeirah, think again!
One must depart from hence,
Laila, or Thalaba;
She dies for thee, or thou for her;
It must be life for life!
Son of Hodeirah, weigh it well,
While yet the choice is thine!'

31

He hesitated not,
But, looking upward, spread his hands to Heaven,
'Oneiza, in thy bower of Paradise,
Receive me, still unstain'd!'

32

'What!' exclaim'd Okba, 'darest thou disobey,
Abandoning all claim
To Allah's longer aid?'

33

The eager exultation of his speech
Earthward recall'd the thoughts of Thalaba.
'And dost thou triumph, Murderer? dost thou deem
Because I perish, that the unsleeping lids
Of Justice shall be closed upon thy crime?
Poor, miserable man! that thou canst live
With such beast-blindness in the present joy, [God
When o'er thy head the sword of
Hangs for the certain stroke!'

34

'Servant of Allah, thou hast disobey'd;
God hath abandon'd thee;
This hour is mine!' cried Okba,
And shook his daughter off,
And drew the dagger from his vest,
And aim'd the deadly blow.

35

All was accomplish'd. Laila rush'd between
To save the saviour Youth.
She met the blow, and sunk into his arms,
And Azrael, from the hands of Thalaba,
Received her parting soul.

THE ELEVENTH BOOK

Those, Sir, that traffic in these seas,
Fraught not their bark with fears.
SIR ROBERT HOWARD.

1

O FOOL, to think thy human hand
Could check the chariot-wheels of Destiny!
To dream of weakness in the all-knowing Mind,
That its decrees should change!
To hope that the united Powers
Of Earth, and Air, and Hell,
Might blot one letter from the Book of Fate,
Might break one link of the eternal chain!
Thou miserable, wicked, poor old man!
Fall now upon the body of thy child,
Beat now thy breast, and pluck the bleeding hairs
From thy grey beard, and lay
Thine ineffectual hand to close her wound,
And call on Hell to aid,
And call on Heaven to send
Its merciful thunderbolt!

2

The young Arabian silently
Beheld his frantic grief.
The presence of the hated youth
To raging anguish stung
The wretched Sorcerer.
'Ay! look and triumph!' he exclaim'd:
'This is the justice of thy God!
A righteous God is he, to let
His vengeance fall upon the innocent head!..
Curse thee, curse thee, Thalaba!'

3

All feelings of revenge
Had left Hodeirah's son.
Pitying and silently he heard
The victim of his own iniquities;
Not with the officious hand
Of consolation, fretting the sore wound
He could not hope to heal.

4

So as the Servant of the Prophet stood,
With sudden motion the night-air
Gently fann'd his cheek.
'Twas a Green Bird, whose wings
Had waved the quiet air.
On the hand of Thalaba
The Green Bird perch'd, and turn'd
A mild eye up, as if to win
The Adventurer's confidence;
Then, springing on, flew forward;
And now again returns
To court him to the way;
And now his hand perceives
Her rosy feet press firmer, as she leaps
Upon the wing again.

5

Obedient to the call,
By the pale moonlight Thalaba pursued,
O'er trackless snows, his way;
Unknowing he what blessed messenger
Had come to guide his steps,..
That Laila's spirit went before his path.

Brought up in darkness, and the child of sin,
Yet, as the meed of spotless innocence,
Just Heaven permitted her by one good deed [death;
To work her own redemption after
So, till the Judgement day,
She might abide in bliss,
Green warbler of the Bowers of Paradise.

6

The morning sun came forth,
Wakening no eye to life
In this wide solitude;
His radiance, with a saffron hue, like heat,
Suffused the desert snow.
The Green Bird guided Thalaba;
Now oaring with slow wing her upward way,
Descending now in slant descent
On out-spread pinions motionless;
Floating now, with rise and fall alternate,
As if the billows of the air
Heaved her with their sink and swell.
And when beneath the moon
The icy glitter of the snow
Dazzled his aching sight,
Then on his arm alighted the Green Bird,
And spread before his eyes
Her plumage of refreshing hue.

7

Evening came on; the glowing clouds
Tinged with a purple ray the mountain ridge
That lay before the Traveller.
Ah! whither art thou gone,
Guide and companion of the youth, whose eye
Has lost thee in the depth of Heaven?
Why hast thou left alone
The weary wanderer in the wilderness?
And now the western clouds grow pale,
And night descends upon his solitude.

8

The Arabian youth knelt down,
And bow'd his forehead to the ground,
And made his evening prayer.
When he arose the stars were bright in heaven,
The sky was blue, and the cold Moon
Shone over the cold snow.
A speck in the air!
Is it his guide that approaches?
For it moves with the motion of life!
Lo! she returns, and scatters from her pinions [morning
Odours diviner than the gales of
Waft from Sabea.

9

Hovering before the youth she hung,
Till from her rosy feet, that at his touch
Uncurl'd their grasp, he took
The fruitful bough they bore.
He took and tasted: a new life
Flow'd through his renovated frame;
His limbs, that late were sore and stiff,
Felt all the freshness of repose;
His dizzy brain was calm'd,
The heavy aching of his lids was gone;
For Laila, from the Bowers of Paradise,
Had borne the healing fruit.

10

So up the mountain steep,
With untired foot he pass'd,
The Green Bird guiding him,
Mid crags, and ice, and rocks,
A difficult way, winding the long ascent.
How then the heart of Thalaba rejoiced,
When, bosom'd in the mountain depths,
A shelter'd Valley open'd on his view!
It was the Simorg's vale,
The dwelling of the Ancient Bird.

11

On a green and mossy bank,
Beside a rivulet,
The Bird of Ages stood.

No sound intruded on his solitude,
Only the rivulet was heard,
Whose everlasting flow,
From the birth-day of the world, had made
The same unvaried murmuring.
Here dwelt the all-knowing Bird
In deep tranquillity,
His eye-lids ever closed
In full enjoyment of profound repose.

12

Reverently the youth approach'd
That old and only Bird,
And crost his arms upon his breast,
And bow'd his head and spake.
'Earliest of existing things,
Earliest thou, and wisest thou,
Guide me, guide me, on my way!
I am bound to seek the Caverns
Underneath the roots of Ocean,
Where the Sorcerers have their seat;
Thou the eldest, thou the wisest,
Guide me, guide me, on my way!'

13

The ancient Simorg on the youth
Unclosed his thoughtful eyes,
And answer'd to his prayer.
'Northward by the stream proceed;
In the Fountain of the Rock
Wash away thy worldly stains
Kneel thou there, and seek the Lord,
And fortify thy soul with prayer.
Thus prepared, ascend the Sledge;
Be bold, be wary; seek and find!
God hath appointed all.'
The Ancient Simorg then let fall his lids,
Relapsing to repose.

14

Northward, along the rivulet,
The adventurer went his way;
Tracing its waters upward to their source.
Green Bird of Paradise,
Thou hast not left the youth!..
With slow associate flight,
She companies his way;
And now they reach the Fountain of the Rock.

15

There, in the cold clear well,
Thalaba wash'd away his earthly stains,
And bow'd his face before the Lord,
And fortified his soul with prayer.
The while, upon the rock,
Stood the celestial Bird,
And pondering all the perils he must pass,
With a mild, melancholy eye,
Beheld the youth beloved.

16

And lo! beneath yon lonely pine, the Sledge:..
There stand the harness'd Dogs,
Their wide eyes watching for the youth,
Their ears erect, and turn'd toward his way.
They were lean as lean might be,
Their furrow'd ribs rose prominent,
And they were black from head to foot,
Save a white line on every breast,
Curved like the crescent moon.
Thalaba takes his seat in the sledge;
His arms are folded on his breast,
The Bird is on his knees;
There is fear in the eyes of the Dogs,
There is fear in their pitiful moan.
And now they turn their heads,
And seeing him seated, away!

17

The youth, with the start of their speed,
Falls back to the bar of the sledge;
His hair floats straight in the stream of the wind
Like the weeds in the running brook.
They wind with speed their upward way,
An icy path through rocks of ice:
His eye is at the summit now,

And thus far all is dangerless;
And now upon the height
The black Dogs pause and pant;
They turn their eyes to Thalaba
As if to plead for pity;
They moan and whine with fear.

18

Once more away! and now
The long descent is seen,
A long, long, narrow path;
Ice-rocks aright, and hills of snow,
Aleft the precipice.
Be firm, be firm, O Thalaba!
One motion now, one bend,
And on the crags below
Thy shatter'd flesh will harden in the frost.
Why howl the Dogs so mournfully?
And wherefore does the blood flow fast
All purple o'er their sable skin?
His arms are folded on his breast,
Nor scourge nor goad hath he,
No hand appears to strike,
No sounding lash is heard;
But piteously they moan and whine,
And track their way with blood.

19

Behold! on yonder height
A giant Fiend aloft
Waits to thrust down the tottering avalanche!
If Thalaba looks back, he dies;
The motion of fear is death.
On . . on . . with swift and steady pace,
Adown that dreadful way!
The Youth is firm, the Dogs are fleet,
The Sledge goes rapidly;
The thunder of the avalanche
Re-echoes far behind.
On . . on . . with swift and steady pace,
Adown that dreadful way!
The Dogs are fleet, the way is steep,
The Sledge goes rapidly;
They reach the plain below.

20

A wide, blank plain, all desolate.
Nor tree, nor bush, nor herb!
On go the Dogs with rapid course,
The Sledge slides after rapidly,
And now the sun went down.
They stopt and look'd at Thalaba,
The Youth perform'd his prayer!
They knelt beside him while he pray'd,
They turn'd their heads to Mecca,
And tears ran down their cheeks.
Then down they laid them in the snow,
As close as they could lie,
They laid them down and slept.
And backward in the sledge,
The Adventurer laid himself;
There peacefully slept Thalaba,
And the Green Bird of Paradise
Lay nestling in his breast.

21

The Dogs awoke him at the dawn,
They knelt and wept again;
Then rapidly they journey'd on,
And still the plain was desolate,
Nor tree, nor bush, nor herb!
And ever at the hour of prayer,
They stopt, and knelt, and wept;
And still that green and graceful Bird
Was as a friend to him by day,
And, ever when at night he slept,
Lay nestling in his breast.

22

In that most utter solitude
It cheer'd his heart to hear
Her soft and soothing voice.
Her voice was soft and sweet,
It rose not with the blackbird's thrill,
Nor warbled like that dearest bird that holds
The solitary man
A loiterer in his thoughtful walk at eve;
But if it swell'd with no exuberant joy,
It had a tone that touch'd a finer string,

A music that the soul received and own'd.
Her bill was not the beak of blood;
There was a human meaning in her eye
When fix'd on Thalaba,
He wonder'd while he gazed,
And with mysterious love
Felt his heart drawn in powerful sympathy.

23

Oh joy! the signs of life appear,
The first and single Fir
That on the limits of the living world
Strikes in the ice its roots.
Another, and another now;
And now the Larch, that flings its arms
Down-curving like the falling wave;
And now the Aspin's scatter'd leaves
Grey-glittering on the moveless twig;
The Poplar's varying verdure now,
And now the Birch so beautiful
Light as a lady's plumes.
Oh joy! the signs of life! the Deer
Hath left his slot beside the way;
The little Ermine now is seen,
White wanderer of the snow;
And now from yonder pines they hear
The clatter of the Grouse's wings;
And now the snowy Owl pursues
The Traveller's sledge, in hope of food;
And hark! the rosy-breasted bird,
The Throstle of sweet song!
Joy! joy! the winter-wilds are left!
Green bushes now, and greener grass,
Red thickets here, all berry-bright,
And here the lovely flowers!

24

When the last morning of their way was come,
After the early prayer,
The Green Bird fix'd on Thalaba
A sad and supplicating eye,
And speech was given her then:
'Servant of God, I leave thee now;
If rightly I have guided thee,
Give me the boon I beg!'

25

'O gentle Bird!' quoth Thalaba,
'Guide and companion of my dangerous way,
Friend and sole solace of my solitude,
How can I pay thee benefits like these?
Ask what thou wilt that I can give,
O gentle Bird, the poor return
Will leave me debtor still!'

26

'Son of Hodeirah!' she replied,
'When thou shalt see an Old Man bent beneath
The burthen of his earthly punishment,
Forgive him, Thalaba!
Yea, send a prayer to God in his behalf!'

27

A flush o'erspread the young Destroyer's cheek;
He turn'd his eye towards the Bird
As if in half repentance; for he thought
Of Okba; and his Father's dying groan
Came on his memory. The celestial Bird
Saw and renew'd her speech;
'O Thalaba, if she who in thine arms
Received the dagger-blow and died for thee
Deserve one kind remembrance, .. save, O save [less death!'
The Father that she loves from end-

28

'Laila! and is it thou?' the youth replied, [thee?
'What is there that I durst refuse to
This is no time to harbour in my heart
One evil thought; .. here I put off revenge,

The last rebellious feeling. . . Be it so!
God grant to me the pardon that I need,
As I do pardon him! . .
But who am I, that I should save
The sinful soul alive?'

29

'Enough!' said Laila. 'When the hour shall come,
Remember me! my task is done.
We meet again in Paradise!'
She said, and shook her wings, and up she soar'd
With arrowy swiftness through the heights of Heaven.

30

His aching eye pursued her path,
When starting onward went the Dogs;
More rapidly they hurried now,
In hope of near repose.
It was the early morning yet,
When, by the well-head of a brook
They stopt, their journey done.
The spring was clear, the water deep;
A venturous man were he, and rash,
That should have probed its depths,
For all its loosen'd bed below,
Heaved strangely up and down,
And to and fro, from side to side,
It heaved, and waved, and toss'd,
And yet the depths were clear,
And yet no ripple wrinkled o'er
The face of that fair Well.

31

And on that Well, so strange and fair,
A little boat there lay,
Without an oar, without a sail,
One only seat it had, one seat,
As if for only Thalaba.
And at the helm a Damsel stood,
A Damsel bright and bold of eye,
Yet did a maiden modesty
Adorn her fearless brow;
Her face was sorrowful, but sure
More beautiful for sorrow.
To her the Dogs look'd wistful up,
And then their tongues were loosed:
'Have we done well, O Mistress dear!
And shall our sufferings end?'

32

The gentle Damsel made reply;
'Poor servants of the God I serve,
When all this witchery is destroy'd,
Your woes will end with mine.
A hope, alas! how long unknown!
This new adventurer gives;
Now God forbid, that he, like you,
Should perish for his fears!
Poor servants of the God I serve,
Wait ye the event in peace.'
A deep and total slumber as she spake
Seized them. Sleep on, poor sufferers! be at rest!
Ye wake no more to anguish: . . ye have borne
The Chosen, the Destroyer! . . soon his hand
Shall strike the efficient blow;
And shaking off your penal forms, shall ye,
With songs of joy, amid the Eden groves,
Hymn the Deliverer's praise.

33

Then did the Damsel say to Thalaba,
'The morn is young, the Sun is fair,
And pleasantly through pleasant banks
Yon quiet stream flows on . .
Wilt thou embark with me?
Thou knowest not the water's way;
Think, Stranger, well! and night must come, . .
Darest thou embark with me?
Through fearful perils thou must pass, . .
Stranger, the wretched ask thine aid!
Thou wilt embark with me!'
She smiled in tears upon the youth; . .

What heart were his, who could gainsay
That melancholy smile ?
'I will,' quoth Thalaba,
'I will, in Allah's name !'

34

He sate him on the single seat,
The little boat moved on.
Through pleasant banks the quiet stream
Went winding pleasantly ;
By fragrant fir-groves now it pass'd,
And now, through alder-shores,
Through green and fertile meadows now
It silently ran by.
The flag-flower blossom'd on its side,
The willow tresses waved,
The flowing current furrow'd round
The water-lily's floating leaf,
The fly of green and gauzy wing,
Fell sporting down its course ;
And grateful to the voyager
The freshness that it breathed,
And soothing to his ear
Its murmur round the prow.
The little boat falls rapidly
Adown the rapid stream.

35

But many a silent spring meantime,
And many a rivulet and rill
Had swoln the growing stream ;
And when the southern Sun began
To wind the downward way of heaven,
It ran a river deep and wide,
Through banks that widen'd still.
Then once again the Damsel spake :
'The stream is strong, the river broad,
Wilt thou go on with me ?
The day is fair, but night must come . .
Wilt thou go on with me ?
Far, far away, the sufferer's eye
For thee hath long been looking, . .
Thou wilt go on with me !'
'Sail on, sail on,' quoth Thalaba,
'Sail on, in Allah's name !'

The little boat falls rapidly
Adown the river-stream.

36

A broader and yet broader stream,
That rock'd the little boat !
The Cormorant stands upon its shoals,
His black and dripping wings
Half open'd to the wind.
The Sun goes down, the crescent Moon
Is brightening in the firmament ;
And what is yonder roar,
That sinking now, and swelling now,
But evermore increasing,
Still louder, louder, grows ?
The little boat falls rapidly
Adown the rapid tide ;
The Moon is bright above,
And the great Ocean opens on their way.

37

Then did the Damsel speak again,
'Wilt thou go on with me ?
The Moon is bright, the sea is calm,
I know the ocean-paths ;
Wilt thou go on with me ? . .
Deliverer ! yes ! thou dost not fear !
Thou wilt go on with me !'
'Sail on, sail on !' quoth Thalaba,
'Sail on, in Allah's name !'

38

The Moon is bright, the sea is calm,
The little boat rides rapidly
Across the ocean waves ;
The line of moonlight on the deep
Still follows as they voyage on ;
The winds are motionless ;
The gentle waters gently part
In dimples round the prow.
He looks above, he looks around,
The boundless heaven, the boundless sea,
The crescent moon, the little boat,
Nought else above, below.

39

The Moon is sunk; a dusky grey
Spreads o'er the Eastern sky;
The stars grow pale and paler; . .
Oh beautiful! the godlike Sun
Is rising o'er the sea!
Without an oar, without a sail,
The little boat rides rapidly; . .
Is that a cloud that skirts the sea?
There is no cloud in heaven!
And nearer now, and darker now . .
It is . . it is . . the Land!
For yonder are the rocks that rise
Dark in the reddening morn;
For loud around their hollow base
The surges rage and foam.

40

The little boat rides rapidly,
And pitches now with shorter toss
Upon the narrower swell;
And now so near, they see
The shelves and shadows of the cliff,
And the low-lurking rocks,
O'er whose black summits, hidden half,
The shivering billows burst; . .
And nearer now they feel the breaker's spray.
Then said the Damsel: 'Yonder is our path
Beneath the cavern arch.
Now is the ebb, and till the ocean flow
We cannot over-ride the rocks.
Go thou, and on the shore
Perform thy last ablutions, and with prayer
Strengthen thy heart . . I too have need to pray.'

41

She held the helm with steady hand
Amid the stronger waves;
Through surge and surf she drove;
The adventurer leapt to land.

THE TWELFTH BOOK

Why should he that loves me sorry be
For my deliverance, or at all complain
My good to hear, and toward joys to see?
I go, and long desired have to go,
I go with gladness to my wished rest.
SPENSER, *Daphnaida*.

1

THEN Thalaba drew off Abdaldar's ring,
And cast it in the sea, and cried aloud,
'Thou art my shield, my trust, my hope,
O God!
Behold and guard me now,
Thou who alone canst save.
If from my childhood up I have look'd on
With exultation to my destiny;
If in the hour of anguish I have own'd
The justice of the hand that chasten'd me;
If of all selfish passions purified
I go to work thy will, and from the world
Root up the ill-doing race,
Lord! let not thou the weakness of my arm
Make vain the enterprize!'

2

The Sun was rising all magnificent,
Ocean and Heaven rejoicing in his beams.
And now had Thalaba stood
Perform'd his last ablutions, and he
And gazed upon the little boat
Riding the billows near,
Where, like a sea-bird breasting the broad waves,
It rose and fell upon the surge,
Till from the glitterance of the sunny main
He turn'd his aching eyes;
And then upon the beach he laid him down,
And watch'd the rising tide.
He did not pray, he was not calm for prayer; [hope,
His spirit, troubled with tumultuous

Toil'd with futurity;
His brain, with busier workings, felt
The roar and raving of the restless sea,
The boundless waves that rose and roll'd and rock'd:
The everlasting sound
Opprest him, and the heaving infinite:
He closed his lids for rest.

3

Meantime with fuller reach and stronger swell,
Wave after wave advanced;
Each following billow lifted the last foam
That trembled on the sand with rainbow hues;
The living flower that, rooted to the rock,
Late from the thinner element
Shrunk down within its purple stem to sleep,
Now feels the water, and again
Awakening, blossoms out
All its green anther-necks.

4

Was there a Spirit in the gale
That fluttered o'er his cheek?
For it came on him like the new-risen sun
Which plays and dallies o'er the night-closed flower,
And woos it to unfold anew to joy;
For it came on him as the dews of eve
Descend with healing and with life
Upon the summer mead;
Or liker the first sound of seraph song
And Angel greeting, to the soul
Whose latest sense had shudder'd at the groan
Of anguish, kneeling by a death-bed side.

5

He starts, and gazes round to seek
The certain presence. 'Thalaba!' exclaim'd
The Voice of the Unseen;..
'Father of my Oneiza!' he replied,
'And have thy years been number'd? art thou too
Among the Angels?'.. 'Thalaba!'
A second and a dearer voice repeats,
'Go in the favour of the Lord,
My Thalaba, go on! [bliss.
My husband, I have drest our bower of
Go, and perform the work;
Let me not longer suffer hope in Heaven!'

6

He turn'd an eager glance toward the sea.
'Come!' quoth the Damsel, and she drove
Her little boat to land.
Impatient through the rising wave,
He rush'd to meet its way,
His eye was bright, his cheek was flush'd with joy. [she ask'd.
'Hast thou had comfort in thy prayers?'
'Yea,' Thalaba replied,
'A heavenly visitation.' 'God be praised!' [vain!'
She answer'd, 'then I do not hope in
And her voice trembled, and her lip
Quiver'd, and tears ran down.

7

'Stranger,' said she, 'in years long past
Was one who vow'd himself
The Champion of the Lord, like thee,
Against the race of Hell.
Young was he, as thyself,
Gentle, and yet so brave!
A lion-hearted man. [love
Shame on me, Stranger! in the arms of
I held him from his calling, till the hour
Was past; and then the Angel who should else
Have crown'd him with his glory-wreath,
Smote him in anger.. Years and years are gone..
And in his place of penance he awaits

Thee, the Deliverer, . . surely thou art he!
It was my righteous punishment,
In the same youth unchanged,
And love unchangeable,
Sorrow for ever fresh,
And bitter penitence,
That gives no respite night nor day from grief,
To abide the written hour, when I should waft [here.
The doom'd Destroyer and Deliverer
Remember thou, that thy success affects
No single fate, no ordinary woes.'

8

As thus she spake, the entrance of the cave
Darken'd the boat below.
Around them from their nests,
The screaming sea-birds fled,
Wondering at that strange shape,
Yet unalarm'd at sight of living man,
Unknowing of his sway and power misused:
The clamours of their young
Echoed in shriller cries,
Which rung in wild discordance round the rock.
And farther as they now advanced,
The dim reflection of the darken'd day
Grew fainter, and the dash [yet,
Of the out-breakers deaden'd; farther
And yet more faint the gleam,
And there the waters, at their utmost bound,
Silently rippled on the rising rock.
They landed and advanced, and deeper in,
Two adamantine doors
Closed up the cavern pass.

9

Reclining on the rock beside,
Sate a grey-headed man,
Watching an hour-glass by.
To him the Damsel spake,
'Is it the hour appointed?' The Old Man
Nor answer'd her awhile,
Nor lifted he his downward eye,
For now the glass ran low,
And, like the days of age,
With speed perceivable,
The latter sands descend;
And now the last are gone.
Then he look'd up, and raised his hand, and smote
The adamantine gates.

10

The gates of adamant
Unfolding at the stroke,
Open'd and gave the entrance. Then she turn'd
To Thalaba and said,
'Go, in the name of God!
I cannot enter, . . I must wait the end
In hope and agony.
God and Mahommed prosper thee,
For thy sake and for ours!'

11

He tarried not, . . he pass'd
The threshold, over which was no return.
All earthly thoughts, all human hopes
And passions now put off,
He cast no backward glance
Toward the gleam of day.
There was a light within, [Sun,
A yellow light, as when the autumnal
Through travelling rain and mist
Shines on the evening hills:
Whether, from central fires effused,
Or that the sun-beams, day by day,
From earliest generations, there absorb'd,
Were gathering for the wrath-flame. Shade was none
In those portentous vaults;
Crag overhanging, nor columnal rock
Cast its dark outline there;

For with the hot and heavy atmosphere
The light incorporate, permeating all,
Spread over all its equal yellowness.
There was no motion in the lifeless air;
He felt no stirring as he pass'd
Adown the long descent;
He heard not his own footsteps on the rock
That through the thick stagnation sent
How sweet it were, he thought,
To feel the flowing wind!
With what a thirst of joy
He should breathe in the open gales of heaven!

12

Downward, and downward still, and still the way,
The lengthening way is safe.
Is there no secret wile,
No lurking enemy?
His watchful eye is on the wall of rock, . .
And warily he marks the roof,
And warily surveys
The path that lies before.
Downward, and downward still, and still the way,
The long, long way is safe;
Rock only, the same light,
The same dead atmosphere,
And solitude, and silence like the grave.

13

At length the long descent
Ends on a precipice;
No feeble ray enter'd its dreadful gulph;
For in the pit profound,
Black Darkness, utter Night,
Repell'd the hostile gleam,
And o'er the surface the light atmosphere
Floated, and mingled not.
Above the depth, four over-awning
Unplumed and huge and strong,
Bore up a little car;
Four living pinions, headless, bodiless,
Sprung from one stem that branch'd below
In four down-arching limbs,
And clench'd the car-rings endlong and athwart
With claws of griffin grasp.

14

But not on these, the depth so terrible
The wondrous wings, fix'd Thalaba his eye;
For there, upon the brink,
With fiery fetters fasten'd to the rock,
A man, a living man, tormented lay,
The young Othatha; in the arms of love
He who had linger'd out the auspicious hour,
Forgetful of his call.
In shuddering pity, Thalaba exclaim'd,
'Servant of God, can I not succour thee?'
He groan'd, and answer'd, 'Son of Man,
I sinn'd, and am tormented; I endure
In patience and in hope.
The hour that shall destroy the Race of
That hour shall set me free.'

15

'Is it not come?' quoth Thalaba,
'Yea! by this omen!' . . and with fearless hand
He grasp'd the burning fetters, 'in the name
Of God!' . . and from the rock
Rooted the rivets, and adown the gulph
Dropt them. The rush of flames roar'd up,
For they had kindled in their fall
The deadly vapours of the pit profound,
And Thalaba bent on and look'd below.
But vainly he explored
The deep abyss of flame,
That sunk beyond the plunge of mortal eye,
Now all ablaze, as if infernal fires
Illumed the world beneath.
Soon was the poison-fuel spent,
The flame grew pale and dim

And dimmer now it fades, and now is quench'd,
And all again is dark,
Save where the yellow air
Enters a little in, and mingles slow.

16

Meantime, the freed Othatha claspt his knees,
And cried, 'Deliverer!' struggling then
With joyful hope, 'and where is she,' he cried,
'Whose promised coming for so many a year . . .'
'Go!' answered Thalaba,
'She waits thee at the gates.'
'And in thy triumph,' he replied,
'There thou wilt join us?' . . The Deliverer's eye
Glanced on the abyss, way else was none . .
The depth was unascendable.
'Await not me,' he cried,
'My path hath been appointed! go . . embark!
Return to life, . . live happy!'

OTHATHA

But thy name? . . [it, . .
That through the nations we may blazon
That we may bless thee!

THALABA

Bless the Merciful!

17

Then Thalaba pronounced the name of God,
And leapt into the car.
Down, down, it sunk, . . down, down, . .
He neither breathes nor sees;
His eyes are closed for giddiness,
His breath is sinking with the fall.
The air that yields beneath the car,
Inflates the wings above.
Down . . down . . a measureless depth! . . down . . down,
Was then the Simorg with the Powers of ill
Associate to destroy?
And was that lovely Mariner
A fiend as false as fair?
For still the car sinks down;
But ever the uprushing wind
Inflates the wings above,
And still the struggling wings
Repel the rushing wind.
Down . . down . . and now it strikes.

18

He stands and totters giddily,
All objects round awhile
Float dizzy on his sight;
Collected soon, he gazes for the way.
There was a distant light that led his search;
The torch a broader blaze,
The unpruned taper flares a longer flame,
But this was strong as is the noontide sun,
So, in the glory of its rays intense,
It quiver'd with green glow.
Beyond was all unseen,
No eye could penetrate
That unendurable excess of light.

19

It veil'd no friendly form, thought Thalaba:
And wisely did he deem,
For at the threshold of the rocky door,
Hugest and fiercest of his kind accurst,
Fit warden of the sorcery-gate,
A rebel Afreet lay;
He scented the approach of human food,
And hungry hope kindled his eye of fire. [sense,
Raising his hand to screen the dazzled
Onward held Thalaba,
And lifted still at times a rapid glance;
Till the due distance gain'd,
With head abased, he laid
An arrow in its rest.

With steady effort and knit forehead then,
Full on the painful light
He fix'd his aching eye, and loosed the bow.

20

A hideous yell ensued;
And sure no human voice had scope or power
For that prodigious shriek
Whose pealing echoes thundered up the rock.
Dim grew the dying light;
But Thalaba leapt onward to the doors
Now visible beyond,
And while the Afreet warden of the way
Was writhing with his death-pangs, over him
Sprung and smote the stony doors,
And bade them, in the name of God, give way!

21

The dying Fiend beneath him, at that name
Tost in worse agony,
And the rocks shudder'd, and the rocky doors
Rent at the voice asunder. Lo! within . .
The Teraph and the Fire,
And Khawla, and in mail complete
Mohareb for the strife.
But Thalaba, with numbing force,
Smites his raised arm, and rushes by;
For now he sees the fire, amid whose flames,
On the white ashes of Hodeirah, lies
Hodeirah's holy sword.

22

He rushes to the Fire:
Then Khawla met the youth,
And leapt upon him, and with clinging arms
Clasps him, and calls Mohareb now to aim
The effectual vengeance. O fool! fool! he sees
His Father's Sword, and who shall bar his way?
Who stand against the fury of that arm
That spurns her to the ground? . .
She rises half, she twists around his knees, . .
A moment . . and he vainly strives
To shake her from her hold;
Impatient then he seized her leathery neck
With throttling grasp, and as she loosed her hold,
Thrust her aside, and unimpeded now
Springs forward to the Sword.

23

The co-existent Flame
Knew the Destroyer; it encircled him,
Roll'd up his robe, and gather'd round his head:
Condensing to intenser splendour there,
His Crown of Glory and his Light of Life,
Hover'd the irradiate wreath.

24

The instant Thalaba had laid his hand
Upon his Father's Sword,
The Living Image in the inner cave
Smote the Round Altar. The Domdaniel rock'd
Through all its thundering vaults;
Over the Surface of the reeling Earth,
The alarum shock was felt;
The Sorcerer brood, all, all, where'er dispersed,
Perforce obey'd the summons; all, . . they came
Compell'd by Hell and Heaven;
By Hell compell'd to keep
Their baptism-covenant,
And with the union of their strength
Oppose the common danger; forced by Heaven
To share the common doom.

25

Vain are all spells! the Destroyer
Treads the Domdaniel floor.
They crowd with human arms and human force
To crush the single foe.
Vain is all human force!
He wields his Father's Sword,
The vengeance of awaken'd Deity.
But chief on Thalaba Mohareb prest;
The Witch in her oracular speech
Announced one fatal blow for both,
And, desperate of self-safety, yet he hoped
To serve the cause of Eblis, and uphold
His empire, true in death.

26

Who shall withstand the Destroyer? 380
Scatter'd before the sword of Thalaba
The Sorcerer throng recede,
And leave him space for combat. Wretched man, . . [avail
What shall the helmet or the shield
Against Almighty anger? . . Wretched man, [chosen
Too late Mohareb finds that he hath
The evil part! . . He rears his shield
To meet the Arabian's sword, . .
Under the edge of that fire-hardened steel,
The shield falls sever'd; his cold arm
Rings with the jarring blow: . . 391
He lifts his scymetar;
A second stroke, and lo! the broken hilt
Hangs from his palsied hand:
And now he bleeds, and now he flies,
And fain would hide himself amid the troop;
But they feel the sword of Hodeirah,
But they also fly from the ruin,
And hasten to the inner cave,
And fall all fearfully 400
Around the Giant Idol's feet,
Seeking protection from the Power they served.

27

It was a Living Image, by the art
Of magic hands, of flesh and bones composed,
And human blood, through veins and arteries
That flow'd with vital action. In the shape
Of Eblis it was made;
Its stature such, and such its strength,
As when among the sons of God 409
Pre-eminent he raised his radiant head,
Prince of the Morning. On his brow
A coronet of meteor flames,
Flowing in points of light.
Self-poised in air before him
Hung the Round Altar, rolling like the World
On its diurnal axis, like the World
Chequer'd with sea and shore,
The work of Demon art.
For where the sceptre in the Idol's hand
Touch'd the Round Altar, in its answering realm, 420
Earth felt the stroke, and Ocean rose in storms,
And shatter'd Cities, shaken from their seat,
Crush'd all their habitants.
His other arm was raised, and its spread palm
Sustain'd the ocean-weight,
Whose naked waters arch'd the sanctuary;
Sole prop and pillar he.

28

Fallen on the ground, around his feet,
The Sorcerers lay. Mohareb's quivering arms
Clung to the Idol's knees; 430
The Idol's face was pale,
And calm in terror he beheld
The approach of the Destroyer.

29

Sure of his stroke, and therefore in pursuit [foe,
Following, nor blind, nor hasty, on his
Moved the Destroyer. Okba met his way,
Of all that brotherhood
He only fearless, miserable man,
The one that had no hope.
'On me, on me,' the childless Sorcerer cried,
'Let fall the weapon! I am he who stole
Upon the midnight of thy Father's tent;
This is the hand that pierced Hodeirah's heart, [blood
That felt thy brethren's and thy sisters'
Gush round the dagger-hilt. Let fall on me
The fated sword! the vengeance-hour is come!
Destroyer, do thy work!'

30

Nor wile, nor weapon, had the desperate wretch;
He spread his bosom to the stroke.
'Old Man, I strike thee not!' said Thalaba;
'The evil thou hast done to me and mine
Brought its own bitter punishment.
For thy dear Daughter's sake I pardon thee,
As I do hope Heaven's pardon . . For her sake
Repent while time is yet! . . thou hast my prayers
To aid thee; thou poor sinner, cast thyself
Upon the goodness of offended God!
I speak in Laila's name; and what if now
Thou canst not think to join in Paradise
Her spotless Spirit, . . hath not Allah made
Al-Araf, in his wisdom? where the sight
Of Heaven may kindle in the penitent
The strong and purifying fire of hope,
Till, at the Day of Judgement, he shall see
The Mercy-Gates unfold.'

31

The astonish'd man stood gazing as he spake, [tears
At length his heart was soften'd, and the
Gush'd, and he sobb'd aloud.
Then suddenly was heard
The all-beholding Prophet's voice divine,
'Thou hast done well, my Servant! Ask and receive thy reward!

32

A deep and aweful joy
Seem'd to dilate the heart of Thalaba;
With arms in reverence cross'd upon his breast,
Upseeking eyes suffused with tears devout,
He answered to the Voice, 'Prophet of God,
Holy, and good, and bountiful!
One only earthly wish have I, to work
Thy will; and thy protection grants me that.
Look on this Sorcerer! heavy are his crimes,
But infinite is mercy! if thy servant
Have now found favour in the sight of God, [save
Let him be touch'd with penitence, and
His soul from utter death.'

33

'The groans of penitence,' replied the Voice,
'Never arise unheard!
But, for thyself, prefer the prayer;
The Treasure-house of Heaven
Is open to thy will.'

34

'Prophet of God!' then answered Thalaba,
'I am alone on earth;
Thou knowest the secret wishes of my heart!
Do with me as thou wilt! thy will is best.'

35

There issued forth no Voice to answer him; [see
But, lo! Hodeirah's Spirit comes to His vengeance, and beside him, a pure form
Of roseate light, his Angel mother hung.
'My Child, my dear, my glorious . . blessed . . Child,
My promise is perform'd . . fulfil thy work!'

36

Thalaba knew that his death-hour was come;
And on he leapt, and springing up,
Into the Idol's heart
Hilt deep he plunged the Sword.
The Ocean-vault fell in, and all were crush'd.
In the same moment, at the gate
Of Paradise, Oneiza's Houri form
Welcomed her Husband to eternal bliss.

THE CURSE OF KEHAMA

ΚΑΤΑΡΑΙ, ΩΣ ΚΑΙ ΤΑ ΑΛΕΚΤΡΥΟΝΟΝΕΟΤΤΑ, ΟΙΚΟΝ ΑΕΙ ΟΨΕ ΚΕΝ
ΕΠΑΝΗΞΑΝ ΕΓΚΑΘΙΣΟΜΕΝΑΙ

'Απόφθ. 'Ανέκ. τοῦ Γυλιέλ. τοῦ Μήτ.

CURSES ARE LIKE YOUNG CHICKENS, THEY ALWAYS COME HOME TO ROOST.

TO

THE AUTHOR OF GEBIR,

WALTER SAVAGE LANDOR,

THIS POEM IS INSCRIBED,

BY

ROBERT SOUTHEY.

ΣΤΗΣΑΤΕ ΜΟΙ ΠΡΩΤΙΑ ΠΟΛΥΤΡΟΠΟΝ ΟΦΡΑ ΦΑΝΕΙΗ
ΠΟΙΚΙΛΟΝ ΕΙΔΟΣ ΕΧΩΝ, ΟΤΙ ΠΟΙΚΙΛΟΝ ΥΜΝΟΝ ΑΡΑΣΣΩ. Νόν. Διόν.

FOR I WILL FOR NO MAN'S PLEASURE
CHANGE A SYLLABLE OR MEASURE;
PEDANTS SHALL NOT TIE MY STRAINS
TO OUR ANTIQUE POETS' VEINS;
BEING BORN AS FREE AS THESE,
I WILL SING AS I SHALL PLEASE.

GEORGE WITHER.

ORIGINAL PREFACE

IN the religion of the Hindoos, which of all false religions is the most monstrous in its fables, and the most fatal in its effects, there is one remarkable peculiarity. Prayers, penances, and sacrifices are supposed to possess an inherent and actual value, in no degree depending upon the disposition or motive of the person who performs them. They are drafts upon Heaven, for which the Gods cannot refuse payment. The worst men, bent upon the worst designs, have in this manner obtained power which has made them formidable to the Supreme Deities themselves, and rendered an *Avatar*, or Incarnation of Veeshnoo the Preserver, necessary. This belief is the foundation of the following Poem. The story is original; but, in all its parts, consistent with the superstition upon which it is built: and however startling the fictions may appear, they might almost be called credible when compared with the genuine tales of Hindoo mythology.

No figures can be imagined more antipicturesque, and less poetical, than the mythological personages of the Bramins. This deformity was easily kept out of sight:—their hundred hands are but a clumsy personification of power; their numerous heads only a gross image of divinity, 'whose countenance,' as the Bhagvat-Geeta expresses it, 'is turned on every side.' To the other obvious objection, that the religion of Hindostan is not generally known enough to supply fit machinery for an English poem, I can only answer, that, if every allusion to it throughout the work is not sufficiently self-explained to render the passage intelligible, there is a want of skill in the poet. Even those readers who should be wholly unacquainted with the writings of our learned Orientalists, will find all the preliminary knowledge that can be needful, in the brief explanation of mythological names prefixed to the Poem.

BRAMA, ... the Creator.
VEESHNOO, . . the Preserver.
SEEVA, ... the Destroyer.
These form the Trimourtee, or Trinity, as it has been called, of the Bramins. The allegory is obvious, but has been made for the Trimourtee, not the Trimourtee for the allegory; and these Deities are regarded by the people as three distinct and personal Gods. The two latter have at this day their hostile sects of worshippers; that of Seeva is the most numerous; and in this Poem, Seeva is represented as Supreme among the Gods. This is the same God whose name is variously written Seeb, Sieven, and Siva, Chiven by the French, Xiven by the Portuguese, and whom European writers sometimes denominate Eswara, Iswaren, Mahadeo, Mahadeva, Rutren, —according to which of his thousand and eight names prevailed in the country where they obtained their information.

INDRA, ... God of the Elements.
The SWERGA, . . his Paradise,—one of the Hindoo heavens.
YAMEN, ... Lord of Hell, and Judge of the Dead.
PADALON, ... Hell, — under the Earth, and, like the Earth, of an octagon shape; its eight gates are guarded by as many Gods.
MARRIATALY, . . the Goddess who is chiefly worshipped by the lower casts.
POLLEAR, ... or Ganesa,—the Protector of Travellers. His statues are placed in the highways, and sometimes in a small lonely sanctuary, in the streets and in the fields.
CASYAPA, ... the Father of the Immortals.
DEVETAS, ... the Inferior Deities.
SURAS, ... Good Spirits.
ASURAS, ... Evil Spirits, or Devils.
GLENDOVEERS, . the most beautiful of the Good Spirits, the Grindouvers of Sonnerat.

THE CURSE OF KEHAMA

I. THE FUNERAL

1

MIDNIGHT, and yet no eye
Through all the Imperial City closed in sleep!
Behold her streets a-blaze
With light that seems to kindle the red sky,
Her myriads swarming through the crowded ways!
Master and slave, old age and infancy,
All, all abroad to gaze;
House-top and balcony
Clustered with women, who throw back their veils
With unimpeded and insatiate sight
To view the funeral pomp which passes by,
As if the mournful rite
Were but to them a scene of joyance and delight.

2

Vainly, ye blessed twinklers of the night,
Your feeble beams ye shed,
Quench'd in the unnatural light which might out-stare
Even the broad eye of day;
And thou from thy celestial way
Pourest, O Moon, an ineffectual ray!
For lo! ten thousand torches flame and flare
Upon the midnight air,
Blotting the lights of heaven
With one portentous glare.
Behold the fragrant smoke in many a fold
Ascending, floats along the fiery sky,
And hangeth visible on high,
A dark and waving canopy.

3

Hark! 'tis the funeral trumpet's breath!
'Tis the dirge of death!
At once ten thousand drums begin,

With one long thunder-peal the ear assailing;
Ten thousand voices then join in,
And with one deep and general din
Pour their wild wailing.
The song of praise is drown'd
Amid the deafening sound;
You hear no more the trumpet's tone,
You hear no more the mourner's moan,
Though the trumpet's breath, and the dirge of death,
Swell with commingled force the funeral yell.
But rising over all in one acclaim
Is heard the echoed and re-echoed name,
From all that countless rout;
Arvalan! Arvalan!
Arvalan! Arvalan!
Ten times ten thousand voices in one shout
Call Arvalan! The overpowering sound,
From house to house repeated rings about,
From tower to tower rolls round.

4

The death-procession moves along;
Their bald heads shining to the torches' ray,
The Bramins lead the way,
Chaunting the funeral song.
And now at once they shout,
Arvalan! Arvalan!
With quick rebound of sound,
All in accordance cry,
Arvalan! Arvalan!
The universal multitude reply.
In vain ye thunder on his ear the name;
Would ye awake the dead?
Borne upright in his palankeen,
There Arvalan is seen!
A glow is on his face,.. a lively red;
It is the crimson canopy
Which o'er his cheek a reddening shade hath shed;
He moves,.. he nods his head,..
But the motion comes from the bearers' tread,
As the body, borne aloft in state,
Sways with the impulse of its own dead weight.

5

Close following his dead son, Kehama came,
Nor joining in the ritual song,
Nor calling the dear name;
With head deprest and funeral vest,
And arms enfolded on his breast,
Silent and lost in thought he moves along.
King of the World, his slaves, unenvying now,
Behold their wretched Lord; rejoiced [they see
The mighty Rajah's misery;
That Nature in his pride hath dealt the blow,
And taught the Master of Mankind to know
Even he himself is man, and not exempt from woe.

6

O sight of grief! the wives of Arvalan,
Young Azla, young Nealliny, are seen!
Their widow-robes of white,
With gold and jewels bright,
Each like an Eastern queen.
Woe! woe! around their palankeen,
As on a bridal day,
With symphony, and dance, and song,
Their kindred and their friends come on.
The dance of sacrifice! the funeral song!
And next the victim slaves in long array,
Richly bedight to grace the fatal day,
Move onward to their death;
The clarions' stirring breath
Lifts their thin robes in every flowing fold,
And swells the woven gold,
That on the agitated air
Flutters and glitters to the torch's glare.

7

A man and maid of aspect wan and wild,
Then, side by side, by bowmen guarded, came;
O wretched father! O unhappy child!
Them were all eyes of all the throng exploring . .
Is this the daring man
Who raised his fatal hand at Arvalan?
Is this the wretch condemn'd to feel
Kehama's dreadful wrath?
Then were all hearts of all the throng deploring;
For not in that innumerable throng
Was one who loved the dead; for who could know
What aggravated wrong
Provoked the desperate blow!

8

Far, far behind, beyond all reach of sight,
In order'd files the torches flow along,
One ever-lengthening line of gliding light:
Far . . far behind,
Rolls on the undistinguishable clamour,
Of horn, and trump, and tambour;
Incessant as the roar
Of streams which down the wintry mountain pour,
And louder than the dread commotion
Of breakers on a rocky shore,
When the winds rage over the waves,
And Ocean to the Tempest raves.

9

And now toward the bank they go,
Where winding on their way below,
Deep and strong the waters flow.
Here doth the funeral pile appear
With myrrh and ambergris bestrew'd,
And built of precious sandal wood.
They cease their music and their outcry here,
Gently they rest the bier;
They wet the face of Arvalan,
No sign of life the sprinkled drops excite;
They feel his breast, . . no motion there;
They feel his lips, . . no breath;
For not with feeble, nor with erring hand,
The brave avenger dealt the blow of death.
Then with a doubling peal and deeper blast,
The tambours and the trumpets sound on high,
And with a last and loudest cry,
They call on Arvalan.

10

Woe! woe! for Azla takes her seat
Upon the funeral pile!
Calmly she took her seat,
Calmly the whole terrific pomp survey'd;
As on her lap the while
The lifeless head of Arvalan was laid.

11

Woe! woe! Nealliny,
The young Nealliny!
They strip her ornaments away,
Bracelet and anklet, ring, and chain, and zone;
Around her neck they leave
The marriage knot alone, . .
That marriage band, which when
Yon waning moon was young,
Around her virgin neck
With bridal joy was hung.
Then with white flowers, the coronal of death,
Her jetty locks they crown.

12

O sight of misery!
You cannot hear her cries, . . their sound
In that wild dissonance is drown'd; . .
But in her face you see
The supplication and the agony, . .
See in her swelling throat the desperate strength

That with vain effort struggles yet for life; [strife,
Her arms contracted now in fruitless
Now wildly at full length
Towards the crowd in vain for pity spread, . .
They force her on, they bind her to the dead.

13

Then all around retire;
Circling the pile, the ministering Bramins stand,
Each lifting in his hand a torch on fire.
Alone the Father of the dead advanced
And lit the funeral pyre.

14

At once on every side
The circling torches drop,
At once on every side
The fragrant oil is pour'd,
At once on every side
The rapid flames rush up.
Then hand in hand the victim band
Roll in the dance around the funeral pyre;
Their garments' flying folds
Float inward to the fire;
In drunken whirl they wheel around;
One drops, . . another plunges in;
And still with overwhelming din
The tambours and the trumpets sound;
And clap of hand, and shouts, and cries,
From all the multitude arise;
While round and round, in giddy wheel,
Intoxicate they roll and reel,
Till one by one whirl'd in they fall,
And the devouring flames have swallow'd all.

15

Then all was still; the drums and clarions ceased; [awe;
The multitude were hush'd in silent
Only the roaring of the flames was heard.

II. THE CURSE

1

Alone towards the Table of the Dead
Kehama moved; there on the altar-stone
Honey and rice he spread.
There with collected voice and painful tone
He call'd upon his son.
Lo! Arvalan appears;
Only Kehama's powerful eye beheld
The thin ethereal spirit hovering nigh;
Only the Rajah's ear
Received his feeble breath.
And is this all? the mournful Spirit said,
This all that thou canst give me after death?
This unavailing pomp,
These empty pageantries that mock the dead!

2

In bitterness the Rajah heard,
And groan'd, and smote his breast, and o'er his face
Cowl'd the white mourning vest.

3

ARVALAN

Art thou not powerful, . . even like a God?
And must I, through my years of wandering,
Shivering and naked to the elements,
In wretchedness await
The hour of Yamen's wrath?
I thought thou wouldst embody me anew,
Undying as I am, . .
Yea, re-create me! . . Father, is this all?
This all? and thou Almighty!

4

But in that wrongful and upbraiding tone,
Kehama found relief,
For rising anger half suppress his grief.

Reproach not me! he cried,
Had I not spell-secured thee from disease,
Fire, sword, . . all common accidents of man, . .
And thou! . . fool, fool . . to perish by a stake!
And by a peasant's arm! . .
Even now, when from reluctant Heaven,
Forcing new gifts and mightier attributes,
So soon I should have quell'd the Death-God's power.

5

Waste not thy wrath on me, quoth Arvalan,
It was my hour of folly! Fate prevail'd,
Nor boots it to reproach me that I fell.
I am in misery, Father! Other souls
Predoom'd to Indra's Heaven, enjoy the dawn
Of bliss, . . to them the temper'd elements
Minister joy: genial delight the sun
Sheds on their happy being, and the stars
Effuse on them benignant influences;
And thus o'er earth and air they roam at will,
And when the number of their days is full,
Go fearlessly before the aweful throne.
But I, . . all naked feeling and raw life, . .
What worse than this hath Yamen's hell in store?
If ever thou didst love me, mercy, Father!
Save me, for thou canst save . . the Elements
Know and obey thy voice.

6

KEHAMA

The Elements
Shall sin no more against thee; whilst I speak
Already dost thou feel their power is gone.
Fear not! I cannot call again the past,
Fate hath made that its own; but Fate shall yield
To me the future; and thy doom be fix'd
By mine, not Yamen's will. Meantime all power
Whereof thy feeble spirit can be made
Participant, I give. Is there aught else
To mitigate thy lot?

ARVALAN

Only the sight of vengeance. Give me that!
Vengeance, full, worthy, vengeance! . . not the stroke
Of sudden punishment, . . no agony
That spends itself and leaves the wretch at rest,
But lasting long revenge.

KEHAMA

What, boy? is that cup sweet? then take thy fill!

7

So as he spake, a glow of dreadful pride
Inflamed his cheek, with quick and angry stride
He moved toward the pile,
And raised his hand to hush the crowd, and cried,
Bring forth the murderer! At the Rajah's voice,
Calmly, and like a man whom fear had stunn'd,
Ladurlad came, obedient to the call;
But Kailyal started at the sound,
And gave a womanly shriek, and back she drew,
And eagerly she roll'd her eyes around,
As if to seek for aid, albeit she knew
No aid could there be found.

8

It chanced that near her on the river brink,
The sculptured form of Marriataly stood;
It was an Idol roughly hewn of wood,
Artless, and mean, and rude;
The Goddess of the poor was she;
None else regarded her with piety.
But when that holy Image Kailyal view'd,
To that she sprung, to that she clung,
On her own Goddess, with close-clasping arms,
For life the maiden hung.

9

They seized the maid; with unrelenting grasp
They bruised her tender limbs;
She, nothing yielding, to this only hope
Clings with the strength of frenzy and despair.
She screams not now, she breathes not now,
She sends not up one vow,
She forms not in her soul one secret prayer,
All thought, all feeling, and all powers of life
In the one effort centering. Wrathful they
With tug and strain would force the maid away; . .
Didst thou, O Marriataly, see their strife,
In pity didst thou see the suffering maid?
Or was thine anger kindled, that rude hands
Assail'd thy holy Image? . . for behold
The holy image shakes!

10

Irreverently bold, they deem the maid
Relax'd her stubborn hold,
And now with force redoubled drag their prey;
And now the rooted Idol to their sway
Bends, . . yields, . . and now it falls.
But then they scream,
For lo! they feel the crumbling bank give way,
And all are plunged into the stream.

11

She hath escaped my will, Kehama cried,
She hath escaped, . . but thou art here,
I have thee still,
The worser criminal!
And on Ladurlad, while he spake, severe
He fix'd his dreadful frown.
The strong reflection of the pile
Lit his dark lineaments,
Lit the protruded brow, the gathered, front,
The steady eye of wrath.

12

But while the fearful silence yet endured,
Ladurlad roused himself;
Ere yet the voice of destiny
Which trembled on the Rajah's lips was loosed,
Eager he interposed,
As if despair had waken'd him to hope;
Mercy! oh mercy! only in defence . .
Only instinctively, . .
Only to save my child, I smote the Prince;
King of the world, be merciful!
Crush me, . . but torture not!

13

The Man-Almighty deign'd him no reply,
Still he stood silent; in no human mood
Of mercy, in no hesitating thought
Of right and justice. At the length he raised
His brow yet unrelax'd, . . his lips unclosed,
And uttered from the heart,
With the whole feeling of his soul enforced,
The gathered vengeance came.

14

I charm thy life
From the weapons of strife,
From stone and from wood,
From fire and from flood,
From the serpent's tooth,
And the beasts of blood:
From Sickness I charm thee,
And Time shall not harm thee;
But Earth which is mine,
Its fruits shall deny thee;
And Water shall hear me,
And know thee and fly thee;
And the Winds shall not touch thee
When they pass by thee,
And the Dews shall not wet thee,
When they fall nigh thee:
And thou shalt seek Death
To release thee, in vain;
Thou shalt live in thy pain
While Kehama shall reign,
With a fire in thy heart,
And a fire in thy brain;
And Sleep shall obey me,
And visit thee never,
And the Curse shall be on thee
For ever and ever.

15

There where the Curse had stricken him,
There stood the miserable man,
There stood Ladurlad, with loose-hanging arms,
And eyes of idiot wandering.
Was it a dream? alas,
He heard the river flow,
He heard the crumbling of the pile,
He heard the wind which shower'd
The thin white ashes round.
There motionless he stood,
As if he hoped it were a dream,
And feared to move, lest he should prove
The actual misery;
And still at times he met Kehama's eye,
Kehama's eye that fastened on him still.

III. THE RECOVERY

1

The Rajah turn'd toward the pile again,
Loud rose the song of death from all the crowd;
Their din the instruments begin,
And once again join in
With overwhelming sound.
Ladurlad starts, . . he looks around;
What hast thou here in view,
O wretched man! in this disastrous scene;
The soldier train, the Bramins who renew
Their ministry around the funeral pyre,
The empty palankeens,
The dimly-fading fire.

2

Where too is she whom most his heart held dear,
His best-beloved Kailyal, where is she,
The solace and the joy of many a year
Of widowhood? is she then gone,
And is he left all-utterly alone,
To bear his blasting curse, and none
To succour or deplore him?
He staggers from the dreadful spot; the throng
Give way in fear before him;
Like one who carries pestilence about,
Shuddering they shun him, where he moves along.
And now he wanders on
Beyond the noisy rout;
He cannot fly and leave his Curse behind,
Yet doth he seem to find
A comfort in the change of circumstance.
Adown the shore he strays,
Unknowing where his wretched feet shall rest,
But farthest from the fatal place is best.

3

By this in the orient sky appears the gleam
Of day. Lo! what is yonder in the stream,
Down the slow river floating slow,
In distance indistinct and dimly seen?
The childless one with idle eye
Followed its motion thoughtlessly;
Idly he gazed unknowing why,
And half unconscious that he watch'd its way.
Belike it is a tree
Which some rude tempest, in its sudden sway,
Tore from the rock, or from the hollow shore
The undermining stream hath swept away.

4

But when anon outswelling by its side,
A woman's robe he spied,
Oh then Ladurlad started,
As one, who in his grave
Had heard an Angel's call.
Yea, Marriataly, thou hast deign'd to save!
Yea, Goddess! it is she,
Kailyal, still clinging senselessly
To thy dear Image, and in happy hour
Upborne amid the wave
By that preserving power.

5

Headlong in hope and in joy
Ladurlad plunged in the water;
The Water knew Kehama's spell,
The Water shrunk before him.
Blind to the miracle,
He rushes to his daughter,
And treads the river-depths in transport wild,
And clasps and saves his child.

6

Upon the farther side a level shore
Of sand was spread: thither Ladurlad bore
His daughter, holding still with senseless hand
The saving Goddess; there upon the sand
He laid the livid maid,
Raised up against his knees her drooping head;
Bent to her lips, . . her lips as pale as death, . .
If he might feel her breath,
His own the while in hope and dread suspended;
Chafed her cold breast, and ever and anon
Let his hand rest, upon her heart extended.

7

Soon did his touch perceive, or fancy there,
The first faint motion of returning life.
He chafes her feet and lays them bare
In the sun; and now again upon her breast
Lays his hot hand; and now her lips he prest,
For now the stronger throb of life he knew;
And her lips tremble too!
The breath comes palpably:
Her quivering lids unclose,
Feebly and feebly fall,
Relapsing as it seem'd to dead repose.

8

So in her father's arms thus languidly,
While over her with earnest gaze he hung,
Silent and motionless she lay,
And painfully and slowly writhed at fits,
At fits to short convulsive starts was stung.

Till when the struggle and strong agony
Had left her, quietly she lay reposed:
Her eyes now resting on Ladurlad's face,
Relapsing now, and now again unclosed.
The look she fix'd upon his face, implies
Nor thought nor feeling; senselessly she lies, [eyes.
Composed like one who sleeps with open

9

Long he leant over her,
In silence and in fear.
Kailyal! . . at length he cried in such a tone
As a poor mother ventures who draws near,
With silent footstep, to her child's sick bed. [her head,
My Father! cried the maid, and raised
Awakening then to life and thought, . . thou here?
For when his voice she heard,
The dreadful past recurr'd,
Which dimly, like a dream of pain,
Till now with troubled sense confused her brain.

10

And hath he spared us then? she cried,
Half rising as she spake,
For hope and joy the sudden strength supplied;
In mercy hath he curb'd his cruel will,
That still thou livest? But as thus she said,
Impatient of that look of hope, her sire
Shook hastily his head;
Oh! he hath laid a Curse upon my life,
A clinging curse, quoth he;
Hath sent a fire into my heart and brain,
A burning fire, for ever there to be!
The Winds of Heaven must never breathe on me;
The Rains and Dews must never fall on me;
Water must mock my thirst and shrink from me;
The common Earth must yield no fruit to me;
Sleep, blessed Sleep! must never light on me;
And Death, who comes to all, must fly from me,
And never, never set Ladurlad free.

11

This is a dream! exclaim'd the incredulous maid,
Yet in her voice the while a fear exprest,
Which in her larger eye was manifest.
This is a dream! she rose and laid her hand
Upon her father's brow, to try the charm;
He could not bear the pressure there; . . he shrunk, . .
He warded off her arm,
As though it were an enemy's blow, he smote
His daughter's arm aside.
Her eye glanced down, his mantle she espied
And caught it up; . . Oh misery! Kailyal cried, [yet
He bore me from the river-depths, and
His garment is not wet!

IV. THE DEPARTURE

1

Reclined beneath a Cocoa's feathery shade
Ladurlad lies,
And Kailyal on his lap her head hath laid,
To hide her streaming eyes.
The boatman, sailing on his easy way,
With envious eye beheld them where they lay;

For every herb and flower
Was fresh and fragrant with the early dew,
Sweet sung the birds in that delicious hour,
And the cool gale of morning as it blew,
Not yet subdued by day's increasing power,
Ruffling the surface of the silvery stream,
Swept o'er the moisten'd sand, and rais'd no shower.
Telling their tale of love,
The boatman thought they lay
At that lone hour, and who so blest as they!

2

But now the Sun in heaven is high,
The little songsters of the sky
Sit silent in the sultry hour,
They pant and palpitate with heat;
Their bills are open languidly
To catch the passing air;
They hear it not, they feel it not,
It murmurs not, it moves not.
The boatman, as he looks to land,
Admires what men so mad to linger there,
For yonder Cocoa's shade behind them falls,
A single spot upon the burning sand.

3

There all the morning was Ladurlad laid,
Silent and motionless like one at ease;
There motionless upon her father's knees
Reclined the silent maid.
The man was still, pondering with steady mind,
As if it were another's Curse,
His own portentous lot;
Scanning it o'er and o'er in busy thought,
As though it were a last night's tale of woe,
Before the cottage door
By some old beldam sung,
While young and old, assembled round,
Listened, as if by witchery bound,
In fearful pleasure to her wondrous tongue.

4

Musing so long he lay, that all things seem
Unreal to his sense, even like a dream,
A monstrous dream of things which could not be.
That beating, burning brow, . . why it was now
The height of noon, and he was lying
In the broad sun, all bare!
What if he felt no wind? the air was still.
That was the general will
Of Nature, not his own peculiar doom;
Yon rows of rice erect and silent stand,
The shadow of the Cocoa's lightest plume
Is steady on the sand.

5

Is it indeed a dream? he rose to try,
Impatient to the water side he went,
And down he bent,
And in the stream he plunged his hasty arm
To break the visionary charm.
With fearful eye and fearful heart,
His daughter watch'd the event;
She saw the start and shudder,
She heard the in-drawn groan,
For the Water knew Kehama's charm,
The Water shrunk before his arm.
His dry hand moved about unmoisten'd there;
As easily might that dry hand avail
To stop the passing gale,
Or grasp the impassive air.
He is Almighty then!
Exclaim'd the wretched man in his despair:

Air knows him, Water knows him ; Sleep
His dreadful word will keep ;
Even in the grave there is no rest for me,
Cut off from that last hope, . . the
wretch's joy ;
And Veeshnoo hath no power to save,
Nor Seeva to destroy.

6

Oh ! wrong not them ! quoth Kailyal,
Wrong not the Heavenly Powers !
Our hope is all in them : They are not
blind !
And lighter wrongs than ours,
And lighter crimes than his,
Have drawn the Incarnate down among
mankind.
Already have the Immortals heard our
cries,
And in the mercy of their righteousness
Beheld us in the hour of our distress !
She spake with streaming eyes,
Where pious love and ardent feeling
beam.
And turning to the Image, threw
Her grateful arms around it, . . It was
thou
Who savedst me from the stream !
My Marriataly, it was thou !
I had not else been here
To share my Father's Curse,
To suffer now, . . and yet to thank thee
thus !

7

Here then, the maiden cried, dear
Father, here
Raise our own Goddess, our divine
Preserver !
The mighty of the earth despise her rites,
She loves the poor who serve her.
Set up her Image here,
With heart and voice the guardian
Goddess bless,
For jealously would she resent
Neglect and thanklessness ; . .
Set up her Image here,
And bless her for her aid with tongue
and soul sincere.

8

So saying on her knees the maid
Began the pious toil.
Soon their joint labour scoops the easy
soil ; [hand,
They raise the Image up with reverent
And round its rooted base they heap the
sand.
O Thou whom we adore,
O Marriataly, thee do I implore,
The virgin cried ; my Goddess, pardon
thou
The unwilling wrong, that I no more,
With dance and song,
Can do thy daily service, as of yore !
The flowers which last I wreathed around
thy brow,
Are withering there ; and never now
Shall I at eve adore thee,
And swimming round with arms out-
spread,
Poise the full pitcher on my head,
In dexterous dance before thee,
While underneath the reedy shed, at rest
My father sat the evening rites to view,
And blest thy name, and blest
His daughter too.

9

Then heaving from her heart a heavy sigh,
O Goddess ! from that happy home,
cried she,
The Almighty Man hath forced us !
And homeward with the thought un-
consciously
She turn'd her dizzy eye. . . But there
on high,
With many a dome, and pinnacle, and
spire,
The summits of the Golden Palaces
Blazed in the dark blue sky, aloft, like
fire.

Father, away! she cried, away!
Why linger we so nigh?
For not to him hath Nature given
The thousand eyes of Deity,
Always and every where with open sight,
To persecute our flight!
Away . . away! she said,
And took her father's hand, and like a child
He followed where she led.

V. THE SEPARATION

1

Evening comes on: arising from the stream,
Homeward the tall flamingo wings his flight;
And where he sails athwart the setting beam,
His scarlet plumage glows with deeper light.
The watchman, at the wish'd approach of night,
Gladly forsakes the field, where he all day,
To scare the winged plunderers from their prey,
With shout and sling, on yonder clay-built height,
Hath borne the sultry ray.
Hark! at the Golden Palaces
The Bramin strikes the hour.
For leagues and leagues around, the brazen sound
Rolls through the stillness of departing day,
Like thunder far away.

2

Behold them wandering on their hopeless way,
Unknowing where they stray,
Yet sure where'er they stop to find no rest.
The evening gale is blowing,
It plays among the trees;
Like plumes upon a warrior's crest,
They see yon cocoas tossing to the breeze.
Ladurlad views them with impatient mind,
Impatiently he hears
The gale of evening blowing,
The sound of waters flowing,
As if all sights and sounds combined
To mock his irremediable woe;
For not for him the blessed waters flow,
For not for him the gales of evening blow,
A fire is in his heart and brain,
And Nature hath no healing for his pain.

3

The Moon is up, still pale
Amid the lingering light.
A cloud ascending in the eastern sky,
Sails slowly o'er the vale,
And darkens round and closes in the night.
No hospitable house is nigh,
No traveller's home the wanderers to invite;
Forlorn, and with long watching overworn,
The wretched father and the wretched child
Lie down amid the wild.

4

Before them full in sight,
A white flag flapping to the winds of night
Marks where the tiger seized a human prey.
Far, far away with natural dread,
Shunning the perilous spot,
At other times abhorrent had they fled;
But now they heed it not.
Nothing they care; the boding death-flag now

In vain for them may gleam and flutter there.
Despair and agony in him,
Prevent all other thought;
And Kailyal hath no heart or sense for aught,
Save her dear father's strange and miserable lot.

5

There in the woodland shade,
Upon the lap of that unhappy maid,
His head Ladurlad laid,
And never word he spake;
Nor heaved he one complaining sigh,
Nor groaned he with his misery,
But silently for her dear sake
Endured the raging pain.
And now the moon was hid on high,
No stars were glimmering in the sky;
She could not see her father's eye,
How red with burning agony;
Perhaps he may be cooler now,
She hoped, and long'd to touch his brow
With gentle hand, yet did not dare
To lay the painful pressure there.
Now forward from the tree she bent,
And anxiously her head she leant,
And listen'd to his breath.
Ladurlad's breath was short and quick,
Yet regular it came,
And like the slumber of the sick,
In pantings still the same.
Oh if he sleeps! . . her lips unclose,
Intently listening to the sound,
That equal sound so like repose.
Still quietly the sufferer lies,
Bearing his torment now with resolute will;
He neither moves, nor groans, nor sighs.
Doth satiate cruelty bestow
This little respite to his woe,
She thought, or are there Gods who look below?

6

Perchance, thought Kailyal, willingly deceived,
Our Marriataly hath his pain relieved,
And she hath bade the blessed sleep assuage
His agony, despite the Rajah's rage.
That was a hope which fill'd her gushing eyes,
And made her heart in silent yearnings rise,
To bless the power divine in thankfulness.
And yielding to that joyful thought her mind,
Backward the maid her aching head reclined
Against the tree, and to her father's breath [ear.
In fear she hearken'd still with earnest
But soon forgetful fits the effort broke;
In starts of recollection then she woke,
Till now benignant Nature overcame
The Virgin's weary and exhausted frame,
Nor able more her painful watch to keep,
She closed her heavy lids, and sunk to sleep.

7

Vain was her hope! he did not rest from pain,
The Curse was burning in his brain;
Alas! the innocent maiden thought he slept,
But Sleep the Rajah's dread commandment kept,
Sleep knew Kehama's Curse.
The dews of night fell round them now,
They never bathed Ladurlad's brow,
They knew Kehama's Curse.
The night-wind is abroad,
Aloft it moves among the stirring trees;
He only heard the breeze, . .
No healing aid to him it brought,

It play'd around his head and touch'd him not,
It knew Kehama's Curse.

8

Listening, Ladurlad lay in his despair,
If Kailyal slept, for wherefore should she share
Her father's wretchedness, which none could cure ?
Better alone to suffer ; he must bear
The burden of his Curse, but why endure
The unavailing presence of her grief ?
She too, apart from him, might find relief ;
For dead the Rajah deem'd her, and as thus
Already she his dread revenge had fled,
So might she still escape and live secure.

9

Gently he lifts his head,
And Kailyal does not feel ;
Gently he rises up, . . she slumbers still ;
Gently he steals away with silent tread.
Anon she started, for she felt him gone ;
She call'd, and through the stillness of the night,
His step was heard in flight.
Mistrustful for a moment of the sound,
She listens ; till the step is heard no more ;
But then she knows that he indeed is gone,
And with a thrilling shriek she rushes on.
The darkness and the wood impede her speed ;
She lifts her voice again,
Ladurlad ! . . and again, alike in vain,
And with a louder cry [away,
Straining its tone to hoarseness ; . . far
Selfish in misery,
He heard the call and faster did he fly.

10

She leans against that tree whose jutting bough
Smote her so rudely. Her poor heart
How audibly it panted,
With sudden stop and start ;
Her breath how short and painfully it came !
Hark ! all is still around her, . .
And the night so utterly dark,
She opened her eyes and she closed them,
And the blackness and blank were the same.

11

'Twas like a dream of horror, and she stood
Half doubting whether all indeed were true.
A tiger's howl loud echoing through the wood,
Roused her ; the dreadful sound she knew,
And turn'd instinctively to what she fear'd.
Far off the tiger's hungry howl was heard ;
A nearer horror met the maiden's view,
For right before her a dim form appear'd,
A human form in that black night,
Distinctly shaped by its own lurid light,
Such light as the sickly moon is seen to shed,
Through spell-raised fogs, a bloody baleful red.

12

That Spectre fix'd his eyes upon her full ;
The light which shone in their accursed orbs
Was like a light from Hell,
And it grew deeper, kindling with the view.
She could not turn her sight

From that infernal gaze, which like a spell
Bound her, and held her rooted to the ground.
It palsied every power,
Her limbs avail'd her not in that dread hour,
There was no moving thence,
Thought, memory, sense were gone:
She heard not now the tiger's nearer cry,
She thought not on her father now,
Her cold heart's blood ran back,
Her hand lay senseless on the bough it clasp'd,
Her feet were motionless;
Her fascinated eyes
Like the stone eye-balls of a statue fix'd,
Yet conscious of the sight that blasted them.

13

The wind is abroad,
It opens the clouds;
Scatter'd before the gale,
They skurry through the sky,
And the darkness retiring rolls over the vale.
The Stars in their beauty come forth on high,
And through the dark blue night
The Moon rides on triumphant, broad and bright.
Distinct and darkening in her light,
Appears that Spectre foul,
The moon-beam gives his face and form to sight,
The shape of man,
The living form and face of Arvalan!..
His hands are spread to clasp her.

14

But at that sight of dread the Maid awoke;
As if a lightning-stroke
Had burst the spell of fear,
Away she broke all frantickly, and fled.
There stood a temple near beside the way,
An open fane of Pollear, gentle God,
To whom the travellers for protection pray.
With elephantine head and eye severe,
Here stood his image, such as when he seiz'd
And tore the rebel Giant from the ground,
With mighty trunk wreathed round
His impotent bulk, and on his tusks, on high
Impaled upheld him between earth and sky.

15

Thither the affrighted Maiden sped her flight,
And she hath reach'd the place of sanctuary;
And now within the temple in despite,
Yea, even before the altar, in his sight,
Hath Arvalan with fleshy arm of might
Seized her. That instant the insulted God
Caught him aloft, and from his sinuous grasp,
As if from some tort catapult let loose,
Over the forest hurl'd him all abroad.

16

O'ercome with dread,
She tarried not to see what heavenly Power
Had saved her in that hour;
Breathless and faint she fled.
And now her foot struck on the knotted root
Of a broad manchineil, and there the Maid
Fell senselessly beneath the deadly shade.

VI. CASYAPA

1

SHALL this then be thy fate, O lovely Maid,
Thus, Kailyal, must thy sorrows then be ended ?
Her face upon the ground,
Her arms at length extended,
There like a corpse behold her laid
Beneath the deadly shade.
What if the hungry tiger, prowling by,
Should snuff his banquet nigh ?
Alas, Death needs not now his ministry ;
The baleful boughs hang o'er her,
The poison-dews descend.
What Power will now restore her ?
What God will be her friend ?

2

Bright and so beautiful was that fair night,
It might have calm'd the gay amid their mirth,
And given the wretched a delight in tears.
One of the Glendoveers,
The loveliest race of all of heavenly birth,
Hovering with gentle motion o'er the earth,
Amid the moonlight air,
In sportive flight was floating round and round,
Unknowing where his joyous way was tending.
He saw the Maid where motionless she lay,
And stoopt his flight descending,
And raised her from the ground.
Her heavy eye-lids are half closed,
Her cheeks are pale and livid like the dead,
Down hang her loose arms lifelessly,
Down hangs her languid head.

3

With timely pity touch'd for one so fair,
The gentle Glendoveer
Press'd her thus pale and senseless to his breast,
And springs aloft in air with sinewy wings,
And bears the Maiden there,
Where Himakoot, the holy Mount, on high
From mid-earth rising in mid-Heaven,
Shines in its glory like the throne of Even.
Soaring with strenuous flight above,
He bears her to the blessed Grove,
Where in his ancient and august abodes,
There dwells old Casyapa, the Sire of Gods.

4

The Father of the Immortals sate,
Where underneath the Tree of Life,
The Fountains of the Sacred River sprung ;
The Father of the Immortals smiled
Benignant on his son.
Knowest thou, he said, my child,
Ereenia, knowest thou whom thou bringest here,
A mortal to the holy atmosphere ?

EREENIA

I found her in the Groves of Earth,
Beneath a poison-tree,
Thus lifeless as thou seest her.
In pity have I brought her to these bowers,
Not erring, Father ! by that smile . .
By that benignant eye !

CASYAPA

What if the Maid be sinful ? if her ways
Were ways of darkness, and her death predoom'd
To that black hour of midnight, when the Moon
Hath turn'd her face away,
Unwilling to behold
The unhappy end of guilt ?

EREENIA

Then what a lie, my Sire, were written here, [died,
In these fair characters! and she had
Sure proof of purer life and happier doom, [Heaven,
Now in the moonlight, in the eye of
If I had left so fair a flower to fade.
But thou, . . all knowing as thou art,
Why askest thou of me?
O Father, oldest, holiest, wisest, best,
To whom all things are plain,
Why askest thou of me?

CASYAPA

Knowest thou Kehama?

EREENIA

The Almighty Man!
Who knows not him and his tremendous power?
The Tyrant of the Earth,
The Enemy of Heaven!

CASYAPA

Fearest thou the Rajah?

EREENIA

He is terrible!

CASYAPA

Yea, he is terrible! such power hath he
That hope hath enter'd Hell.
The Asuras and the spirits of the damn'd
Acclaim their Hero; Yamen, with the might
Of Godhead, scarce can quell
The rebel race accurst: [rise,
Half from their beds of torture they up-
And half uproot their chains.
Is there not fear in Heaven?
The Souls that are in bliss suspend their joy;
The danger hath disturb'd
The calm of Deity,
And Brama fears, and Veeshnoo turns his face
In doubt toward Seeva's throne.

EREENIA

I have seen Indra tremble at his prayers,
And at his dreadful penances turn pale.
They claim and wrest from Seeva power so vast,
That even Seeva's self,
The Highest, cannot grant and be secure.

CASYAPA

And darest thou, Ereenia, brave
The Almighty Tyrant's power?

EREENIA

I brave him, Father! I?

CASYAPA

Darest thou brave his vengeance?.. For, if not,
Take her again to earth,
Cast her before the tiger in his path,
Or where the death-dew-dropping tree
May work Kehama's will.

EREENIA

Never!

CASYAPA

Then meet his wrath! for He, even He,
Hath set upon this worm his wanton foot.

EREENIA

I knew her not, how wretched and how fair,
When here I wafted her. . . Poor Child of Earth,
Shall I forsake thee, seeing thee so fair,
So wretched? O my Father, let the Maid
Dwell in the Sacred Grove!

CASYAPA

That must not be,
For Force and Evil then would enter here; [sin,
Ganges, the holy stream which cleanseth
Would flow from hence polluted in its springs, [death,
And they who gasp upon its banks in

Feel no salvation. Piety, and Peace,
And Wisdom, these are mine; but not the power
Which could protect her from the Almighty Man;
Nor when the spirit of dead Arvalan
Should persecute her here to glut his rage,
To heap upon her yet more agony,
And ripen more damnation for himself.

EREENIA

Dead Arvalan?

CASYAPA

All power to him, whereof
The disembodied spirit in its state
Of weakness could be made participant,
Kehama hath assign'd, until his days
Of wandering shall be number'd.

EREENIA

Look! she drinks
The gale of healing from the blessed Groves.
She stirs, and lo! her hand
Hath touch'd the Holy River in its source,
Who would have shrunk if aught impure were nigh.

CASYAPA

The Maiden, of a truth, is pure from sin.

5

The waters of the Holy Spring
About the hand of Kailyal play;
They rise, they sparkle, and they sing,
Leaping where languidly she lay,
As if with that rejoicing stir
The Holy Spring would welcome her.
The Tree of life which o'er her spread,
Benignant bow'd its sacred head,
And dropt its dews of healing;
And her heart-blood at every breath,
Recovering from the strife of death,
Drew in new strength and feeling.
Behold her beautiful in her repose,
A life-bloom reddening now her dark-brown cheek;
And lo! her eyes unclose,
Dark as the depth of Ganges' spring profound
When night hangs over it,
Bright as the moon's refulgent beam,
That quivers on its clear up-sparkling stream.

6

Soon she let fall her lids,
As one who, from a blissful dream
Waking to thoughts of pain,
Fain would return to sleep, and dream again.
Distrustful of the sight,
She moves not, fearing to disturb
The deep and full delight.
In wonder fix'd, opening again her eye
She gazes silently,
Thinking her mortal pilgrimage was past,
That she had reach'd her heavenly home of rest,
And these were Gods before her,
Or spirits of the blest.

7

Lo! at Ereenia's voice.
A Ship of Heaven comes sailing down the skies.
Where would'st thou bear her? cries
The ancient Sire of Gods.
Straight to the Swerga, to my Bower of Bliss,
The Glendoveer replies,
To Indra's own abodes.
Foe of her foe, were it alone for this
Indra should guard her from his vengeance there;
But if the God forbear,
Unwilling yet the perilous strife to try,
Or shrinking from the dreadful Rajah's might, . .
Weak as I am, O Father, even I
Stand forth in Seeva's sight.

8

Trust thou in him whate'er betide,
And stand forth fearlessly!
The Sire of Gods replied:
All that He wills is right, and doubt not thou,
Howe'er our feeble scope of sight
May fail us now,
His righteous will in all things must be done.
My blessing be upon thee, O my son!

VII. THE SWERGA

1

Then in the Ship of Heaven, Ereenia laid
The waking, wondering Maid;
The Ship of Heaven, instinct with thought, display'd
Its living sail, and glides along the sky.
On either side in wavy tide,
The clouds of morn along its path divide;
The Winds who swept in wild career on high,
Before its presence check their charmed force;
The Winds that loitering lagg'd along their course,
Around the living Bark enamour'd play,
Swell underneath the sail, and sing before its way.

2

That Bark, in shape, was like the furrow'd shell
Wherein the Sea-Nymphs to their parent-King,
On festal day, their duteous offerings bring.
Its hue? . . Go watch the last green light
Ere Evening yields the western sky to Night;
Or fix upon the Sun thy strenuous sight
Till thou hast reach'd its orb of chrysolite.
The sail from end to end display'd
Bent, like a rainbow, o'er the Maid.
An Angel's head, with visual eye,
Through trackless space, directs its chosen way;
Nor aid of wing, nor foot, nor fin,
Requires to voyage o'er the obedient sky.
Smooth as the swan when not a breeze at even
Disturbs the surface of the silver stream,
Through air and sunshine sails the Ship of Heaven.

3

Recumbent there the Maiden glides along
On her aërial way,
How swift she feels not, though the swiftest wind
Had flagg'd in flight behind.
Motionless as a sleeping babe she lay,
And all serene in mind,
Feeling no fear; for that etherial air
With such new life and joyance fill'd her heart,
Fear could not enter there;
For sure she deem'd her mortal part was o'er,
And she was sailing to the heavenly shore;
And that angelic form, who moved beside,
Was some good Spirit sent to be her guide.

4

Daughter of Earth! therein thou deem'st aright;
And never yet did form more beautiful,
In dreams of night descending from on high,
Bless the religious Virgin's gifted sight,
Nor like a vision of delight,
Rise on the raptured Poet's inward eye.
Of human form divine was he,

The immortal Youth of Heaven who floated by,
Even such as that divinest form shall be
In those blest stages of our onward race,
When no infirmity,
Low thought, nor base desire, nor wasting care,
Deface the semblance of our heavenly sire.

5

The wings of Eagle or of Cherubim
Had seem'd unworthy him;
Angelic power and dignity and grace
Were in his glorious pennons; from the neck
Down to the ankle reach'd their swelling web
Richer than robes of Tyrian dye, that deck
Imperial Majesty:
Their colour like the winter's moonless sky,
When all the stars of midnight's canopy
Shine forth; or like the azure deep at noon,
Reflecting back to heaven a brighter blue.
Such was their tint when closed, but when outspread,
The permeating light
Shed through their substance thin a varying hue;
Now bright as when the rose,
Beauteous as fragrant, gives to scent and sight
A like delight; now like the juice that flows
From Douro's generous vine;
Or ruby when with deepest red it glows;
Or as the morning clouds refulgent shine,
When, at forthcoming of the Lord of Day,
The Orient, like a shrine,
Kindles as it receives the rising ray,
And heralding his way,
Proclaims the presence of the Power divine.

6

Thus glorious were the wings
Of that celestial Spirit, as he went
Disporting through his native element.
Nor these alone
The gorgeous beauties that they gave to view;
Through the broad membrane branched a pliant bone,
Spreading like fibres from their parent stem,
Its veins like interwoven silver shone,
Or as the chaster hue
Of pearls that grace some Sultan's diadem.
Now with slow stroke and strong behold him smite
The buoyant air, and now in gentler flight,
On motionless wing expanded, shoot along.

7

Through air and sunshine sails the Ship of Heaven;
Far, far beneath them lies
The gross and heavy atmosphere of earth;
And with the Swerga gales,
The Maid of mortal birth
At every breath a new delight inhales.
And now toward its port the Ship of Heaven,
Swift as a falling meteor, shapes its flight,
Yet gently as the dews of night that gem,
And do not bend the hare-bell's slenderest stem.
Daughter of Earth, Ereenia cried, alight;
This is thy place of rest, the Swerga this,
Lo, here my Bower of Bliss!

8

He furl'd his azure wings, which round him fold
Graceful as robes of Grecian chief of old.
The happy Kailyal knew not where to gaze;
Her eyes around in joyful wonder roam,
Now turn'd upon the lovely Glendoveer,
Now on his heavenly home.

EREENIA

Here, Maiden, rest in peace,
And I will guard thee, feeble as I am.
The Almighty Rajah shall not harm thee here,
While Indra keeps his throne.

KAILYAL

Alas, thou fearest him!
Immortal as thou art, thou fearest him!
I thought that death had saved me from his power;
Not even the dead are safe.

EREENIA

Long years of life and happiness,
O Child of Earth be thine!
From death I sav'd thee, and from all thy foes
Will save thee, while the Swerga is secure.

KAILYAL

Not me alone, O gentle Deveta!
I have a Father suffering upon earth,
A persecuted, wretched, poor, good man,
For whose strange misery
There is no human help,
And none but I dare comfort him
Beneath Kehama's Curse;
O gentle Deveta, protect him too!

EREENIA

Come, plead thyself to Indra! Words like thine
May win their purpose, rouse his slumbering heart,
And make him yet put forth his arm to wield
The thunder, while the thunder is his own.

9

Then to the Garden of the Deity
Ereenia led the Maid.
In the mid garden tower'd a giant Tree;
Rock-rooted on a mountain-top, it grew,
Rear'd its unrivall'd head on high,
And stretch'd a thousand branches o'er the sky,
Drinking with all its leaves celestial dew.
Lo! where from thence as from a living well
A thousand torrents flow!
For still in one perpetual shower,
Like diamond drops, etherial waters fell
From every leaf of all its ample bower.
Rolling adown the steep
From that aërial height,
Through the deep shade of aromatic trees,
Half-seen, the cataracts shoot their gleams of light,
And pour upon the breeze
Their thousand voices; far away the roar,
In modulations of delightful sound,
Half-heard and ever varying, floats around.
Below, an ample Lake expanded lies,
Blue as the o'er-arching skies:
Forth issuing from that lovely Lake
A thousand rivers water Paradise.
Full to the brink, yet never overflowing,
They cool the amorous gales, which, ever blowing,
O'er their melodious surface love to stray;
Then winging back their way,
Their vapours to the parent Tree repay;
And ending thus where they began,

And feeding thus the source from whence they came,
The eternal rivers of the Swerga ran,
For ever renovate, yet still the same.

10

On that ethereal lake, whose waters lie
Blue and transpicuous, like another sky,
The Elements had rear'd their King's abode.
A strong controuling power their strife suspended,
And there their hostile essences they blended,
To form a Palace worthy of the God.
Built on the Lake, the waters were its floor;
And here its walls were water arch'd with fire,
And here were fire with water vaulted o'er;
And spires and pinnacles of fire
Round watery cupolas aspire,
And domes of rainbow rest on fiery towers;
And roofs of flame are turreted around
With cloud, and shafts of cloud with flame are bound.
Here too the Elements for ever veer,
Ranging around with endless interchanging;
Pursued in love, and so in love pursuing,
In endless revolutions here they roll;
For ever their mysterious work renewing;
The parts all shifting, still unchanged the whole.
Even we on earth at intervals descry
Gleams of the glory, streaks of flowing light,
Openings of heaven, and streams that flash at night
In fitful splendour, through the northern sky.

11

Impatient of delay, Ereenia caught
The Maid aloft, and spread his wings abroad,
And bore her to the presence of the God.
There Indra sate upon his throne reclined,
Where Devetas adore him;
The lute of Nared, warbling on the wind,
All tones of magic harmony combined
To sooth his troubled mind,
While the dark-eyed Apsaras danced before him.
In vain the God-musician play'd,
In vain the dark-eyed Nymphs of Heaven essay'd
To charm him with their beauties in the dance; [appear,
And when he saw the mortal Maid
Led by the heroic Glendoveer,
A deeper trouble fill'd his countenance.
What hast thou done, Ereenia, said the God,
Bringing a mortal here?
And while he spake his eye was on the Maid;
The look he gave was solemn, not severe:
No hope to Kailyal it convey'd,
And yet it struck no fear;
There was a sad displeasure in his air,
But pity too was there.

EREENIA

Hear me, O Indra! On the lower earth
I found this child of man, by what mishap
I know not, lying in the lap of death.
Aloft I bore her to our Father's grove,
Not having other thought, than when the gales
Of bliss had heal'd her, upon earth again
To leave its lovely daughter. Other thoughts
Arose, when Casyapa declared her fate;

For she is one who groans beneath the power
Of the dread Rajah, terrible alike
To men and Gods. His son, dead Arvalan, [power,
Arm'd with a portion, Indra, of thy
Already wrested from thee, persecutes
The Maid, the helpless one, the innocent.
What then behoved me but to waft her here
To my own Bower of Bliss? what other choice?
The Spirit of foul Arvalan not yet
Hath power to enter here; here thou art yet [own.
Supreme, and yet the Swerga is thine

INDRA

No child of man, Ereenia, in the Bowers
Of Bliss may sojourn, till he hath put off
His mortal part; for on mortality
Time and Infirmity and Death attend,
Close followers they, and in their mournful train
Sorrow and Pain and Mutability.
Did these find entrance here, we should behold
Our joys, like earthly summers, pass away.
Those joys perchance may pass; a stronger hand
May wrest my sceptre, and unparadise
The Swerga; . . but, Ereenia, if we fall,
Let it be Fate's own arm that casts us down:
We will not rashly hasten and provoke
The blow, nor bring ourselves the ruin on.

EREENIA

Fear courts the blow, Fear brings the ruin on. [Destiny
Needs must the chariot-wheels of
Crush him who throws himself before their track,
Patient and prostrate.

INDRA

All may yet be well.
Who knows but Veeshnoo will descend and save,
Once more incarnate?

EREENIA

Look not there for help,
Nor build on unsubstantial hope thy trust.
Our Father Casyapa hath said he turns
His doubtful eye to Seeva, even as thou
Dost look to him for aid. But thine own strength
Should for thine own salvation be put forth;
Then might the higher Powers approving see
And bless the brave resolve. . . Oh, that my arm
Could wield yon lightnings which play idly there,
In inoffensive radiance round thy head!
The Swerga should not need a champion now, [vain!
Nor Earth implore deliverance still in

INDRA

Thinkest thou I want the will? Rash Son of Heaven,
What if my arm be feeble as thine own
Against the dread Kehama? He went on
Conquering in irresistible career,
Till his triumphant car had measured o'er
The insufficient earth, and all the Kings
Of men received his yoke; then had he won
His will, to ride upon their necks elate,
And crown his conquests with the sacrifice
That should, to men and gods, proclaim him Lord [World,
And Sovereign Master of the vassal
Sole Rajah, the Omnipotent below.

The steam of that portentous sacrifice
Arose to Heaven. Then was the hour to strike;
Then in the consummation of his pride,
His height of glory, then the thunderbolt
Should have gone forth, and hurl'd him from his throne
Down to the fiery floor of Padalon,
To everlasting burnings, agony
Eternal, and remorse which knows no end.
That hour went by: grown impious in success,
By prayer and penances he wrested now
Such power from Fate, that soon, if Seeva turn not
His eyes on earth, and no Avatar save,
Soon will he seize the Swerga for his own,
Roll on through Padalon his chariot wheels,
Tear up the adamantine bolts which lock
The accurst Asuras to its burning floor,
And force the drink of Immortality
From Yamen's charge. . . Vain were it now to strive;
My thunder cannot pierce the sphere of power
Wherewith, as with a girdle, he is bound.

KAILYAL

Take me to earth, O gentle Deveta!
Take me again to earth! This is no place
Of rest for me! . . my Father still must bear
His curse. . he shall not bear it all alone;
Take me to earth, that I may follow him! . .
I do not fear the Almighty Man! the Gods
Are feeble here; but there are higher Powers
Who will not turn their eyes from wrongs like ours;
Take me to earth, O gentle Deveta! . .

12

Saying thus she knelt, and to his knees she clung
And bow'd her head, in tears and silence praying.
Rising anon, around his neck she flung
Her arms, and there with folded hands she hung,
And fixing on the guardian Glendoveer
Her eyes, more eloquent than Angel's tongue,
Again she cried, There is no comfort here!
I must be with my Father in his pain. .
Take me to earth, O Deveta, again!

13

Indra with admiration heard the Maid.
O Child of Earth, he cried,
Already in thy spirit thus divine,
Whatever weal or woe betide,
Be that high sense of duty still thy guide,
And all good Powers will aid a soul like thine.
Then turning to Ereenia, thus he said,
Take her where Ganges hath its second birth,
Below our sphere, and yet above the earth; . [power
There may Ladurlad rest beyond the
Of the dread Rajah, till the fated hour.

VIII. THE SACRIFICE

1

Dost thou tremble, O Indra, O God of the Sky,
Why slumber those thunders of thine?
Dost thou tremble on high, . .
Wilt thou tamely the Swerga resign, . .
Art thou smitten, O Indra, with dread?
Or seest thou not, seest thou not, Monarch divine,
How many a day to Seeva's shrine
Kehama his victim hath led?
Nine and ninety days are fled,

Nine and ninety steeds have bled ;
One more, the rite will be complete,
One victim more, and this the dreadful day.
Then will the impious Rajah seize thy seat,
And wrest the thunder-sceptre from thy sway.
Along the mead the hallow'd Steed
Yet bends at liberty his way ;
At noon his consummating blood will flow.
O day of woe ! above, below,
That blood confirms the Almighty Tyrant's reign !
Thou tremblest, O Indra, O God of the Sky,
Thy thunder is vain,
Thou tremblest on high for thy power !
But where is Veeshnoo at this hour,
But where is Seeva's eye ?
Is the Destroyer blind ?
Is the Preserver careless for mankind ?

2

Along the mead the hallow'd Steed
Still wanders wheresoe'er he will,
O'er hill, or dale, or plain ;
No human hand hath trick'd that mane
From which he shakes the morning dew ;
His mouth has never felt the rein,
His lips have never froth'd the chain ;
For pure of blemish and of stain,
His neck unbroke to mortal yoke,
Like Nature free the Steed must be,
Fit offering for the Immortals he.
A year and day the Steed must stray
Wherever chance may guide his way,
Before he fall at Seeva's shrine ;
The year and day have pass'd away,
Nor touch of man hath marr'd the rite divine.
And now at noon the Steed must bleed,
The perfect rite to-day must force the meed
Which Fate reluctant shudders to bestow ;
Then must the Swerga-God
Yield to the Tyrant of the world below ;
Then must the Devetas obey
The Rajah's rod, and groan beneath his hateful sway.

3

The Sun rides high ; the hour is nigh ;
The multitude who long,
Lest aught should mar the rite,
In circle wide on every side,
Have kept the Steed in sight,
Contract their circle now, and drive him on.
Drawn in long files before the Temple-court,
The Rajah's archers flank an ample space ;
Here, moving onward still, they drive him near,
Then, opening, give him way to enter here.

4

Behold him, how he starts and flings his head !
On either side in glittering order spread,
The archers ranged in narrowing lines appear ;
The multitude behind close up the rear
With moon-like bend, and silently await
The aweful end,
The rite that shall from Indra wrest his power.
In front, with far-stretched walls, and many a tower,
Turret and dome and pinnacle elate,
The huge Pagoda seems to load the land :
And there before the gate
The Bramin band expectant stand,
The axe is ready for Kehama's hand.

5

Hark ! at the Golden Palaces
The Bramin strikes the time !
One, two, three, four, a thrice-told chime,

And then again, one, two.
The bowl that in its vessel floats, anew
Must fill and sink again,
Then will the final stroke be due.
The Sun rides high, the noon is nigh,
And silently, as if spell bound,
The multitude expect the sound.

6

Lo! how the Steed, with sudden start,
Turns his quick head to every part;
Long files of men on every side appear.
The sight might well his heart affright,
And yet the silence that is here
Inspires a stranger fear;
For not a murmur, not a sound
Of breath or motion rises round,
No stir is heard in all that mighty crowd;
He neighs, and from the temple-wall
The voice re-echoes loud,
Loud and distinct, as from a hill
Across a lonely vale, when all is still.

7

Within the temple, on his golden throne
Reclined, Kehama lies,
Watching with steady eyes
The perfumed light that, burning bright,
Metes out the passing hours.
On either hand his eunuchs stand,
Freshening with fans of peacock-plumes the air,
Which, redolent of all rich gums and flowers,
Seems, overcharged with sweets, to stagnate there.
Lo! the time-taper's flame ascending
Creeps up its coil toward the fated line;
Kehama rises and goes forth,
And from the altar, ready where it lies,
He takes the axe of sacrifice.

8

That instant from the crowd, with sudden shout,
A Man sprang out
To lay upon the Steed his hand profane.
A thousand archers, with unerring eye,
At once let fly,
And with their hurtling arrows fill the sky.
In vain they fall upon him fast as rain;
He bears a charmed life, which may defy
All weapons, . . and the darts that whizz around,
As from an adamantine panoply
Repell'd, fall idly to the ground.
Kehama clasp'd his hands in agony
And saw him grasp the hallow'd courser's mane,
Spring up with sudden bound,
And with a frantic cry,
And madman's gesture, gallop round and round.

9

They seize, they drag him to the Rajah's feet.
What doom will now be his, . . what vengeance meet
Will he, who knows no mercy, now require?
The obsequious guards around, with blood-hound eye,
Look for the word, in slow-consuming fire,
By piece-meal death, to make the wretch expire,
Or hoist his living carcass, hook'd on high,
To feed the fowls and insects of the sky;
Or if aught worse inventive cruelty
To that remorseless heart of royalty
Might prompt, accursed instruments they stand
To work the wicked will with wicked hand.
Far other thoughts were in the multitude;
Pity, and human feelings, held them still;

And stifled sighs and groans supprest were there,
And many a secret curse and inward prayer
Call'd on the insulted Gods to save mankind.
Expecting some new crime, in fear they stood,
Some horror which would make the natural blood
Start, with cold shudderings thrill the sinking heart,
Whiten the lip, and make the abhorrent eye
Roll back and close, prest in for agony.

10

How then fared he for whom the mighty crowd
Suffer'd in spirit thus, . . how then fared he ?
A ghastly smile was on his lip, his eye
Glared with a ghastly hope, as he drew nigh,
And cried aloud, Yes, Rajah ! it is I !
And wilt thou kill me now ?
The countenance of the Almighty Man
Fell when he knew Ladurlad, and his brow
Was clouded with despite, as one ashamed.
That wretch again ! indignant he exclaim'd,
And smote his forehead, and stood silently
Awhile in wrath : then, with ferocious smile,
And eyes which seem'd to darken his dark cheek,
Let him go free ! he cried ; he hath his Curse,
And vengeance upon him can wreak no worse . .
But ye who did not stop him . . tremble ye !

11

He bade the archers pile their weapons there :
No manly courage fill'd the slavish band,
No sweetening vengeance roused a brave despair.
He call'd his horsemen then, and gave command
To hem the offenders in, and hew them down.
Ten thousand scymitars at once up-[rear'd,
Flash up, like waters sparkling to the sun ;
A second time the fatal brands appear'd
Lifted aloft, . . they glitter'd then no more,
Their light was gone, their splendour quench'd in gore.
At noon the massacre begun,
And night closed in before the work of death was done.

IX. THE HOME-SCENE

1

THE steam of slaughter from that place of blood
Spread o'er the tainted sky.
Vultures, for whom the Rajah's tyranny
So oft had furnish'd food, from far and nigh
Sped to the lure : aloft with joyful cry,
Wheeling around, they hover'd over head ;
Or, on the temple perch'd, with greedy eye,
Impatient watch'd the dead.
Far off the tigers, in the inmost wood,
Heard the death shriek, and snuff'd the scent of blood ;
They rose, and through the covert went their way,
Couch'd at the forest edge, and waited for their prey.

2

He who had sought for death went wandering on,
The hope which had inspired his heart was gone,
Yet a wild joyance still inflamed his face,
A smile of vengeance, a triumphant glow.
Where goes he ? . . Whither should Ladurlad go !
Unwittingly the wretch's footsteps trace
Their wonted path toward his dwelling-place ;
And wandering on, unknowing where,
He starts like one surprised at finding he is there.

3

Behold his lowly home,
By yonder broad-bough'd plane o'ershaded :
There Marriataly's Image stands,
And there the garland twined by Kailyal's hands
Around its brow hath faded.
The peacocks, at their master's sight,
Quick from the leafy thatch alight,
And hurry round, and search the ground,
And veer their glancing necks from side to side,
Expecting from his hand
Their daily dole which erst the Maid supplied,
Now all too long denied.

4

But as he gazed around,
How strange did all accustom'd sights appear !
How differently did each familiar sound
Assail his alter'd ear !
Here stood the marriage bower,
Rear'd in that happy hour
When he, with festal joy and youthful pride,
Had brought Yedillian home, his beauteous bride.
Leaves not its own, and many a borrow'd flower,
Had then bedeck'd it, withering ere the night ;
But he who look'd from that auspicious day
For years of long delight,
And would not see the marriage bower decay,
There planted and nurst up, with daily care,
The sweetest herbs that scent the ambient air,
And train'd them round to live and flourish there.
Nor when dread Yamen's will
Had call'd Yedillian from his arms away
Ceased he to tend the marriage bower, but still,
Sorrowing, had drest it like a pious rite
Due to the monument of past delight.

5

He took his wonted seat before the door, . .
Even as of yore,
When he was wont to view with placid eyes,
His daughter at her evening sacrifice.
Here were the flowers which she so carefully
Did love to rear for Marriataly's brow ;
Neglected now,
Their heavy heads were drooping, overblown :
All else appear'd the same as heretofore,
All . . save himself alone ;
How happy then, . . and now a wretch for evermore !

6

The market-flag which hoisted high,
From far and nigh,
Above yon cocoa grove is seen,
Hangs motionless amid the sultry sky.
Loud sounds the village drum ; a happy crowd

Is there; Ladurlad hears their distant voices,
But with their joy no more his heart rejoices; [fare,
And how their old companion now may
Little they know, and less they care;
The torment he is doom'd to bear
Was but to them the wonder of a day,
A burthen of sad thoughts soon put away.

7

They knew not that the wretched man was near, [ear,
And yet it seem'd, to his distemper'd
As if they wrong'd him with their merriment.
Resentfully he turn'd away his eyes,
Yet turn'd them but to find
Sights that enraged his mind
With envious grief more wild and overpowering.
The tank which fed his fields was there, and there
The large-leaved lotus on the waters flowering.
There, from the intolerable heat
The buffaloes retreat;
Only their nostrils raised to meet the air,
Amid the sheltering element they rest.
Impatient of the sight, he closed his eyes,
And bow'd his burning head, and in despair
Calling on Indra, . . Thunder-God! he said,
Thou owest to me alone this day thy throne,
Be grateful, and in mercy strike me dead.

8

Despair had roused him to that hopeless prayer,
Yet thinking on the heavenly Powers, his mind
Drew comfort; and he rose and gather'd flowers,
And twined a crown for Marriataly's brow;
And taking then her wither'd garland down,
Replaced it with the blooming coronal.
Not for myself, the unhappy Father cried,
Not for myself, O Mighty One! I pray,
Accursed as I am beyond thy aid!
But, oh! be gracious still to that dear Maid
Who crown'd thee with these garlands day by day,
And danced before thee aye at even-tide
In beauty and in pride.
O Marriataly, wheresoe'er she stray
Forlorn and wretched, still be thou her guide!

9

A loud and fiendish laugh replied,
Scoffing his prayer. Aloft, as from the air,
The sound of insult came: he look'd, and there
The visage of dead Arvalan came forth,
Only his face amid the clear blue sky,
With long-drawn lips of insolent mockery,
And eyes whose lurid glare
Was like a sulphur fire,
Mingling with darkness ere its flames expire.

10

Ladurlad knew him well: enraged to see
The cause of all his misery,
He stoop'd and lifted from the ground
A stake, whose fatal point was black with blood;
The same wherewith his hand had dealt the wound,
When Arvalan, in hour with evil fraught,
For violation seized the shrieking Maid.

Thus arm'd, in act again to strike he stood,
And twice with inefficient wrath essay'd
To smite the impassive shade.
The lips of scorn their mockery-laugh renew'd,
And Arvalan put forth a hand and caught [light,
The sunbeam, and condensing there its
Upon Ladurlad turn'd the burning stream.
Vain cruelty! the stake
Fell in white ashes from his hold, but he
Endured no added pain; his agony
Was full, and at the height;
The burning stream of radiance nothing harm'd him;
A fire was in his heart and brain,
And from all other flame
Kehama's Curse had charm'd him.

11

Anon the Spirit waved a second hand;
Down rush'd the obedient whirlwind from the sky,
Scoop'd up the sand like smoke, and from on high,
Shed the hot shower upon Ladurlad's head. there;
Where'er he turns, the accursed Hand is
East, West, and North, and South, on every side
The Hand accursed waves in air to guide
The dizzying storm; ears, nostrils, eyes, and mouth
It fills and choaks, and clogging every pore,
Taught him new torments might be yet in store.
Where shall he turn to fly? behold his house [bower,
In flames! uprooted lies the marriage-
The Goddess buried by the sandy shower.
Blindly, with staggering step, he reels about,
And still the accursed Hand pursued,
And still the lips of scorn their mockery-laugh renew'd.

12

What, Arvalan! hast thou so soon forgot [defy
The grasp of Pollear? Wilt thou still
The righteous Powers of heaven? or know'st thou not
That there are yet superior Powers on high, [flight,
Son of the Wicked? . . Lo, in rapid
Ereenia hastens from the etherial height,
Bright is the sword celestial in his hand;
Like lightning in its path athwart the sky,
He comes and drives, with angel-arm, the blow.
Oft have the Asuras, in the wars of Heaven,
Felt that keen sword by arm angelic driven,
And fled before it from the fields of light.
Thrice through the vulnerable shade
The Glendoveer impels the griding blade,
The wicked Shade flies howling from his foe.
So let that Spirit foul
Fly, and for impotence of anger, howl,
Writhing with anguish, and his wounds deplore; [served,
Worse punishment hath Arvalan de-
And righteous Fate hath heavier doom in store.

13

Not now the Glendoveer pursues his flight;
He bade the Ship of Heaven alight,
And gently there he laid
The astonish'd Father by the happy Maid,

The Maid now shedding tears of deep delight.
Beholding all things with incredulous eyes,
Still dizzy with the sand-storm, there he lay,
While sailing up the skies, the living Bark
Through air and sunshine held its heavenly way.

X. MOUNT MERU

1

SWIFT through the sky the vessel of the Suras
Sails up the fields of ether like an Angel.
Rich is the freight, O Vessel, that thou bearest!
Beauty and Virtue,
Fatherly cares and filial veneration,
Hearts which are proved and strengthen'd by affliction,
Manly resentment, fortitude and action,
Womanly goodness;
All with which Nature halloweth her daughters,
Tenderness, truth, and purity and meekness,
Piety, patience, faith and resignation,
Love and devotement.
Ship of the Gods, how richly art thou laden!
Proud of the charge, thou voyagest rejoicing,
Clouds float around to honour thee, and Evening
Lingers in heaven.

2

A Stream descends on Meru mountain;
None hath seen its secret fountain;
It had its birth, so Sages say,
Upon the memorable day
When Parvati presumed to lay,
In wanton play,
Her hands, too venturous Goddess, in her mirth,
On Seeva's eyes, the light and life of Earth.
Thereat the heart of the Universe stood still:
The Elements ceased their influences; the Hours
Stopt on the eternal round; Motion and Breath,
Time, Change, and Life and Death,
In sudden trance opprest, forgot their powers.
A moment, and the dread eclipse was ended;
But at the thought of Nature thus suspended,
The sweat on Seeva's forehead stood,
And Ganges thence upon the world descended,
The Holy River, the Redeeming Flood.

3

None hath seen its secret fountain;
But on the top of Meru Mountain
Which rises o'er the hills of earth,
In light and clouds, it hath its mortal birth.
Earth seems that pinnacle to rear
Sublime above this worldly sphere,
Its cradle, and its altar, and its throne;
And there the new-born River lies
Outspread beneath its native skies,
As if it there would love to dwell
Alone and unapproachable.
Soon flowing forward, and resign'd
To the will of the Creating Mind,
It springs at once, with sudden leap,
Down from the immeasurable steep.
From rock to rock, with shivering force rebounding,
The mighty cataract rushes; Heaven around,
Like thunder, with the incessant roar resounding,

And Meru's summit shaking with the sound.
Wide spreads the snowy foam, the sparkling spray
Dances aloft; and ever there at morning
The earliest sunbeams haste to wing their way, [adorning;
With rainbow wreaths the holy stream
And duly the adoring Moon at night
Sheds her white glory there,
And in the watery air
Suspends her halo-crowns of silver light.

4

A mountain-valley in its blessed breast
Receives the stream, which there delights to lie,
Untroubled and at rest
Beneath the untainted sky.
There in a lovely lake it seems to sleep,
And thence through many a channel dark and deep,
Their secret way the holy Waters wind,
Till, rising underneath the root
Of the Tree of Life on Hemakoot,
Majestic forth they flow to purify mankind.

5

Towards this Lake, above the nether sphere,
The living Bark with angel eye
Directs its course along the obedient sky.
Kehama hath not yet dominion here;
And till the dreaded hour,
When Indra by the Rajah shall be driven
Dethroned from Heaven,
Here may Ladurlad rest beyond his power.

6

The living Bark alights; the Glendoveer
Then lays Ladurlad by the blessed Lake; . . [Daughter!
O happy Sire, and yet more happy
The etherial gales his agony aslake,
His daughter's tears are on his cheek,
His hand is in the water;
The innocent man, the man opprest,
Oh joy! . . hath found a place of rest
Beyond Kehama's sway;
The Curse extends not here; his pains have pass'd away.

7

O happy Sire, and happy Daughter!
Ye on the banks of that celestial water
Your resting place and sanctuary have found.
What! hath not then their mortal taint defiled
The sacred solitary ground?
Vain thought! the Holy Valley smiled
Receiving such a Sire and Child;
Ganges, who seem'd asleep to lie,
Beheld them with benignant eye,
And rippled round melodiously,
And roll'd her little waves, to meet
And welcome their beloved feet.
The gales of Swerga thither fled,
And heavenly odours there were shed
About, below, and overhead;
And Earth rejoicing in their tread,
Hath built them up a blooming Bower,
Where every amaranthine flower
Its deathless blossom interweaves
With bright and undecaying leaves.

8

Three happy beings are there here,
The Sire, the Maid, the Glendoveer.
A fourth approaches, . . who is this
That enters in the Bower of Bliss?
No form so fair might painter find
Among the daughters of mankind;
For death her beauties hath refined,
And unto her a form hath given
Framed of the elements of Heaven;
Pure dwelling place for perfect mind.
She stood and gazed on Sire and Child;
Her tongue not yet had power to speak,

The tears were streaming down her cheek;
And when those tears her sight beguiled,
And still her faltering accents fail'd,
The Spirit, mute and motionless,
Spread out her arms for the caress,
Made still and silent with excess
Of love and painful happiness.

9

The Maid that lovely form survey'd;
Wistful she gazed, and knew her not,
But Nature to her heart convey'd
A sudden thrill, a startling thought,
A feeling many a year forgot,
Now like a dream anew recurring,
As if again in every vein
Her mother's milk was stirring,
With straining neck and earnest eye
She stretch'd her hands imploringly,
As if she fain would have her nigh,
Yet fear'd to meet the wish'd embrace,
At once with love and awe opprest.
Not so Ladurlad; he could trace,
Though brighten'd with angelic grace,
His own Yedillian's earthly face;
He ran and held her to his breast!
Oh joy above all joys of Heaven,
By Death alone to others given,
This moment hath to him restored
The early-lost, the long-deplored.

10

They sin who tell us Love can die.
With life all other passions fly,
All others are but vanity.
In Heaven Ambition cannot dwell,
Nor Avarice in the vaults of Hell;
Earthly these passions of the Earth,
They perish where they have their birth;
But Love is indestructible.
Its holy flame for ever burneth,
From Heaven it came, to Heaven returneth;
Too oft on Earth a troubled guest,
At times deceived, at times opprest,
It here is tried and purified,
Then hath in Heaven its perfect rest:
It soweth here with toil and care,
But the harvest time of Love is there.

11

Oh! when a Mother meets on high
The Babe she lost in infancy,
Hath she not then, for pains and fears,
The day of woe, the watchful night,
For all her sorrow, all her tears,
An over-payment of delight?

12

A blessed family is this
Assembled in the Bower of Bliss!
Strange woe, Ladurlad, hath been thine,
And pangs beyond all human measure,
And thy reward is now divine,
A foretaste of eternal pleasure.
He knew indeed there was a day
When all these joys would pass away,
And he must quit this blest abode;
And, taking up again the spell,
Groan underneath the baleful load,
And wander o'er the world again
Most wretched of the sons of men:
Yet was this brief repose, as when
A traveller in the Arabian sands,
Half-fainting on his sultry road,
Hath reach'd the water-place at last;
And resting there beside the well,
Thinks of the perils he has past,
And gazes o'er the unbounded plain,
The plain which must be traversed still,
And drinks, . . yet cannot drink his fill;
Then girds his patient loins again.
So to Ladurlad now was given
New strength, and confidence in heaven,
And hope, and faith invincible.

13

For often would Ereenia tell
Of what in elder days befell,
When other Tyrants in their might,
Usurp'd dominion o'er the earth;
And Veeshnoo took a human birth,

Deliverer of the Sons of men,
And slew the huge Ermaccasen,
And piece-meal rent, with lion force,
Errenen's accursed corse,
And humbled Baly in his pride;
And when the Giant Ravanen
Had borne triumphant from his side
Sita, the earth-born God's beloved bride,
Then from his island-kingdom, laugh'd to scorn
The insulted husband, and his power defied;
How to revenge the wrong in wrath he [hied,
Bridging the sea before his dreadful way,
And met the hundred-headed foe,
And dealt him the unerring blow;
By Brama's hand the righteous lance was given,
And by that arm immortal driven,
It laid the mighty Tyrant low;
And Earth and Ocean, and high Heaven,
Rejoiced to see his overthrow.
Oh! doubt not thou, Yedillian cried,
Such fate Kehama will betide;
For there are Gods who look below, . .
Seeva, the Avenger, is not blind,
Nor Veeshnoo careless for mankind.

14

Thus was Ladurlad's soul imbued
With hope and holy fortitude;
And Child and Sire, with pious mind,
Alike resolved, alike resign'd,
Look'd onward to the evil day:
Faith was their comfort, Faith their stay;
They trusted woe would pass away,
And Tyranny would sink subdued,
And Evil yield to Good.

15

Lovely wert thou, O Flower of Earth!
Above all flowers of mortal birth;
But foster'd in this blissful bower,
From day to day, and hour to hour,
Lovelier grew the lovely flower.
O blessed, blessed company!
When men and heavenly spirits greet,
And they whom Death had sever'd meet,
And hold again communion sweet; . .
O blessed, blessed company!

16

The Sun, careering round the sky,
Beheld them with rejoicing eye,
And bade his willing Charioteer
Relax his speed as they drew near;
Arounin check'd the rainbow reins,
The seven green coursers shook their manes,
And brighter rays around them threw;
The Car of Glory in their view
More radiant, more resplendent grew;
And Surya[1], through his veil of light,
Beheld the Bower, and blest the sight.

17

The Lord of Night, as he sail'd by,
Stay'd his pearly boat on high;
And while around the blissful Bower
He bade the softest moonlight flow,
Linger'd to see that earthly flower,
Forgetful of his Dragon foe,
Who, mindful of their ancient feud,
With open jaws of rage pursued.

18

There all good Spirits of the air,
Suras and Devetas repair;
Aloft they love to hover there,
And view the flower of mortal birth
Here for her innocence and worth,
Transplanted from the fields of earth; . .
And him, who on the dreadful day
When Heaven was fill'd with consternation,
And Indra trembled with dismay,
And for the sounds of joy and mirth,
Woe was heard and lamentation,
Defied the Rajah in his pride,

[1] Surya, the Sun.

Though all in Heaven and Earth beside
Stood mute in dolorous expectation;
And, rushing forward in that hour,
Saved the Swerga from his power.
Grateful for this they hover nigh,
And bless that blessed Company.

19

One God alone, with wanton eye,
Beheld them in their Bower;
O ye, he cried, who have defied
The Rajah, will ye mock my power?
'Twas Camdeo riding on his lory,
'Twas the immortal Youth of Love;
If men below, and Gods above,
Subject alike, quoth he, have felt these darts,
Shall ye alone, of all in story,
Boast impenetrable hearts?
Hover here, my gentle lory,
Gently hover, while I see
To whom hath Fate decreed the glory,
To the Glendoveer or me.

20

Then in the dewy evening sky,
The bird of gorgeous plumery
Poised his wings and hover'd nigh.
It chanced at that delightful hour
Kailyal sate before the Bower,
On the green bank with amaranth sweet,
Where Ganges warbled at her feet.
Ereenia there, before the Maid,
His sails of ocean blue display'd;
And sportive in her sight,
Moved slowly o'er the lake with gliding flight;
Anon with sudden stroke and strong,
In rapid course careering, swept along;
Now shooting downward from his heavenly height,
Plunged in the deep below,
Then rising, soar'd again,
And shook the sparkling waters off like rain,
And hovering o'er the silver surface hung.
At him young Camdeo bent the bow;
With living bees the bow was strung,
The fatal bow of sugar-cane,
And flowers which would inflame the heart
With their petals barb'd the dart.

21

The shaft, unerringly addrest,
Unerring flew, and smote Ereenia's breast.
Ah, Wanton! cried the Glendoveer,
Go aim at idler hearts,
Thy skill is baffled here!
A deeper love I bear that Maid divine,
A love that springeth from a higher will,
A holier power than thine!

22

A second shaft, while thus Ereenia cried,
Had Camdeo aim'd at Kailyal's side;
But lo! the Bees which strung his bow
Broke off, and took their flight.
To that sweet Flower of earth they wing their way,
Around her raven tresses play,
And buzz about her with delight,
As if with that melodious sound,
They strove to pay their willing duty
To mortal purity and beauty.

23

Ah! Wanton! cried the Glendoveer,
No power hast thou for mischief here!
Choose thou some idler breast,
For these are proof, by nobler thoughts possest.
Go, to thy plains of Matra go,
And string again thy broken bow!

24

Rightly Ereenia spake; and ill had thoughts
Of earthly love beseem'd the sanctuary
Where Kailyal had been wafted, that the Soul

Of her dead Mother there might strengthen her, [lore,
Feeding her with the milk of heavenly
And influxes of Heaven imbue her heart
With hope and faith, and holy fortitude,
Against the evil day. Here rest a while
In peace, O father! mark'd for misery
Above all sons of men; O daughter! doom'd
For sufferings and for trials above all
Of women; . . yet both favour'd, both beloved [peace.
By all good Powers, rest here a while in

XI. THE ENCHANTRESS

1

When from the sword by arm angelic driven,
Foul Arvalan fled howling, wild in pain,
His thin essential spirit, rent and riven
With wounds, united soon and heal'd again;
Backward the accursed turn'd his eye in flight, [then,
Remindful of revengeful thoughts even
And saw where, gliding through the evening light,
The Ship of Heaven sail'd upward through the sky, [sight.
Then, like a meteor, vanish'd from his
Where should he follow? vainly might he try
To trace through trackless air its rapid course,
Nor dared he that angelic arm defy,
Still sore and writhing from its dreaded force.

2

Should he the lust of vengeance lay aside?
Too long had Arvalan in ill been train'd;
Nurst up in power and tyranny and pride,
His soul the ignominious thought disdain'd.
Or to his mighty Father should he go,
Complaining of defeature twice sustain'd,
And ask new powers to meet the immortal foe? . .
Repulse he fear'd not, but he fear'd rebuke,
And shamed to tell him of his overthrow.
There dwelt a dread Enchantress in a nook [been,
Obscure; old helpmate she to him had
Lending her aid in many a secret sin;
And there for counsel now his way he took.

3

She was a woman, whose unlovely youth,
Even like a canker'd rose which none will cull,
Had wither'd on the stalk; her heart was full
Of passions which had found no natural scope,
Feelings which there had grown but ripen'd not,
Desires unsatisfied, abortive hope,
Repinings which provoked vindictive thought:
These restless elements for ever wrought
Fermenting in her with perpetual stir,
And thus her spirit to all evil moved;
She hated men because they loved not her,
And hated women because they were loved.
And thus, in wrath and hatred and despair,
She tempted Hell to tempt her; and resign'd
Her body to the Demons of the Air,
Wicked and wanton fiends, who where they will
Wander abroad, still seeking to do ill,

And take whatever vacant form they find,
Carcase of man or beast that life hath left,
Foul instrument for them of fouler mind.
To these the Witch her wretched body gave,
So they would wreak her vengeance on mankind;
She thus at once their mistress and their slave;
And they to do such service nothing loth,
Obey'd her bidding, slaves and masters both.

4

So from this cursed intercourse she caught
Contagious power of mischief, and was taught
Such secrets as are damnable to guess.
Is there a child whose little lovely ways
Might win all hearts, . . on whom his parents gaze
Till they shed tears of joy and tenderness?
Oh! hide him from that Witch's withering sight!
Oh! hide him from the eye of Lorrinite!
Her look hath crippling in it, and her curse
All plagues which on mortality can light;
Death is his doom if she behold, . . or worse, . .
Diseases loathsome and incurable,
And inward sufferings that no tongue can tell.

5

Woe was to him, on whom that eye of hate
Was bent; for, certain as the stroke of Fate,
It did its mortal work, nor human arts
Could save the unhappy wretch, her chosen prey;
For gazing, she consumed his vital parts,
Eating his very core of life away.
The wine which from yon wounded palm on high
Fills yonder gourd, as slowly it distils,
Grows sour at once if Lorrinite pass by.
The deadliest worm from which all creatures fly
Fled from the deadlier venom of her eye;
The babe unborn, within its mother's womb,
Started and trembled when the Witch came nigh;
And in the silent chambers of the tomb,
Death shudder'd her unholy tread to hear,
And from the dry and mouldering bones did fear
Force a cold sweat, when Lorrinite was near.

6

Power made her haughty: by ambition fired,
Ere long to mightier mischiefs she aspired.
The Calis, who o'er Cities rule unseen,
Each in her own domain a Demon Queen,
And there adored with blood and human life,
They knew her, and in their accurst employ
She stirr'd up neighbouring states to mortal strife.
Sani, the dreadful God, who rides abroad
Upon the King of the Ravens, to destroy
The offending sons of men, when his four hands
Were weary with their toil, would let her do
His work of vengeance upon guilty lands;
And Lorrinite, at his commandment, knew
When the ripe earthquake should be loosed, and where
To point its course. And in the baneful air

The pregnant seeds of death he bade her strew,
All deadly plagues and pestilence to brew.
The Locusts were her army, and their bands,
Where'er she turn'd her skinny finger, flew.
The floods in ruin roll'd at her commands;
And when, in time of drought, the husbandman
Beheld the gather'd rain about to fall,
Her breath would drive it to the desert sands,
While in the marshes' parch'd and gaping soil
The rice-roots by the searching Sun were dried,
And in lean groups, assembled at the side
Of the empty tank, the cattle dropt and died;
And Famine, at her bidding, wasted wide
The wretched land, till, in the public way,
Promiscuous where the dead and dying lay,
Dogs fed on human bones in the open light of day.

7

Her secret cell the accursed Arvalan,
In quest of vengeance, sought, and thus began.
Mighty mother! mother wise!
Revenge me on my enemies.

LORRINITE

Comest thou, son, for aid to me?
Tell me who have injured thee,
Where they are, and who they be:
Of the Earth, or of the Sea,
Or of the aërial company?
Earth, nor Sea, nor Air is free
From the powers who wait on me,
And my tremendous witchery.

ARVALAN

She for whom so ill I sped,
Whom my Father deemeth dead,
Lives, for Marriataly's aid
From the water saved the Maid.
In hatred I desire her still,
And in revenge would have my will.
A Deveta with wings of blue,
And sword whose edge even now I rue,
In a Ship of Heaven on high,
Pilots her along the sky.
Where they voyage thou canst tell,
Mistress of the mighty spell.

8

At this the Witch, through shrivell'd lips and thin,
Sent forth a sound half whistle and half hiss.
Two winged Hands came in,
Armless and bodiless,
Bearing a globe of liquid crystal, set
In frame as diamond bright, yet black as jet.
A thousand eyes were quench'd in endless night
To form that magic globe; for Lorrinite
Had, from their sockets, drawn the liquid sight,
And kneaded it, with re-creating skill,
Into this organ of her mighty will.
Look in yonder orb, she cried,
Tell me what is there descried.

9

ARVALAN

A mountain top, in clouds of light
Enveloped, rises on my sight;
Thence a cataract rushes down,
Hung with many a rainbow crown;
Light and clouds conceal its head;
Below, a silver Lake is spread;
Upon its shores a Bower I see,
Fit home for blessed company.
See they come forward, . . one, two, three, . .

The last a Maiden, . . it is she!
The foremost shakes his wings of blue,
'Tis he whose sword even yet I rue;
And in that other one I know
The visage of my deadliest foe.
Mother, let thy magic might
Arm me for the mortal fight;
Helm and shield and mail afford,
Proof against his dreaded sword.
Then will I invade their seat,
Then shall vengeance be complete.

10

LORRINITE

Spirits who obey my will,
Hear him, and his wish fulfil!
So spake the mighty Witch, nor farther spell
Needed; anon a sound, like smother'd thunder,
Was heard, slow rolling under;
The solid pavement of the cell
Quaked, heaved, and cleft asunder,
And at the feet of Arvalan display'd,
Helmet and mail, and shield and scymitar, were laid.

11

The Asuras, often put to flight
And scatter'd in the fields of light
By their foes' celestial might,
Forged this enchanted armour for the fight.
'Mid fires intense did they anneal,
In mountain furnaces, the quivering steel,
Till, trembling through each deepening hue,
It settled in a midnight blue;
Last they cast it, to aslake,
In the penal icy lake.
Then they consign'd it to the Giant brood;
And while they forged the impenetrable arms,
The Evil Powers, to oversee them, stood,
And there imbued
The work of Giant strength with magic charms.
Foul Arvalan, with joy, survey'd
The crescent sabre's cloudy blade,
With deeper joy the impervious mail,
The shield and helmet of avail.
Soon did he himself array,
And bade her speed him on his way.

12

Then she led him to the den,
Where her chariot, night and day,
Stood harness'd ready for the way.
Two Dragons, yoked in adamant, convey
The magic car; from either collar sprung
An adamantine rib, which met in air,
O'er-arch'd, and crost and bent diverging there,
And firmly in its arc upbore,
Upon their brazen necks, the seat of power.
Arvalan mounts the car, and in his hand
Receives the magic reins from Lorrinite;
The dragons, long obedient to command,
Their ample sails expand;
Like steeds well-broken to fair lady's hand,
They feel the reins of might,
And up the northern sky begin their flight.

13

Son of the Wicked, doth thy soul delight
To think its hour of vengeance now is nigh?
Lo! where the far-off light
Of Indra's palace flashes on his sight,
And Meru's heavenly summit shines on high,
With clouds of glory bright,
Amid the dark-blue sky.
Already, in his hope, doth he espy,

Himself secure in mail of tenfold charms,
Ereenia writhing from the magic blade,
The Father sent to bear his Curse, . . the Maid
Resisting vainly in his impious arms.

14

Ah, Sinner! whose anticipating soul
Incurs the guilt even when the crime is spared!
Joyous toward Meru's summit on he fared,
While the twin Dragons, rising as he guides, [the pole.
With steady flight, steer northward for
Anon, with irresistible controul,
Force mightier far than his arrests their course;
It wrought as though a Power unseen had caught
Their adamantine yokes to drag them on.
Straight on they bend their way, and now, in vain,
Upward doth Arvalan direct the rein;
The rein of magic might avails no more,
Bootless its strength against that unseen Power
That in their mid career,
Hath seized the Chariot and the Charioteer.
With hands resisting, and down-pressing feet
Upon their hold insisting,
He struggles to maintain his difficult seat.
Seeking in vain with that strange Power to vie,
Their doubled speed the affrighted Dragons try.
Forced in a stream from whence was no retreat,
Strong as they are, behold them whirl'd along,
Headlong, with useless pennons, through the sky.

15

What Power was that, which, with resistless might,
Foil'd the dread magic thus of Lorrinite?
'Twas all-commanding Nature . . They were here
Within the sphere of the adamantine rocks
Which gird Mount Meru round, as far below
That heavenly height where Ganges hath its birth
Involved in clouds and light,
So far above its roots of ice and snow.

16

On . . on they roll . . rapt headlong they roll on; . .
The lost canoe, less rapidly than this,
Down the precipitous stream is whirl'd along
To the brink of Niagara's dread abyss.
On . . on they roll, and now, with shivering shock,
Are dash'd against the rock that girds the Pole.
Down from his shatter'd mail the unhappy Soul
Is dropt, . . ten thousand thousand fathoms down, . .
Till in an ice-rift, 'mid the eternal snow,
Foul Arvalan is stopt. There let him howl,
Groan there, . . and there with unavailing moan,
For aid on his Almighty Father call.

17

All human sounds are lost
Amid those deserts of perpetual frost,
Old Winter's drear domain,
Beyond the limits of the living World,
Beyond Kehama's reign.

Of utterance and of motion soon bereft,
Frozen to the ice-rock, there behold him lie,
Only the painful sense of Being left,
A Spirit who must feel, and cannot die,
Bleaching and bare beneath the polar sky.

XII. THE SACRIFICE COMPLETED

1

O YE who, by the Lake
On Meru Mount, partake
The joys which Heaven hath destined for the blest,
Swift, swift, the moments fly,
The silent hours go by,
And ye must leave your dear abode of rest.
O wretched Man, prepare
Again thy Curse to bear!
Prepare, O wretched Maid, for farther woe!
The fatal hour draws near,
When Indra's heavenly sphere
Must own the Tyrant of the World below.
To-day the hundredth Steed,
At Seeva's shrine must bleed,
The dreadful sacrifice is full to-day;
Nor man nor God hath power,
At this momentous hour,
Again to save the Swerga from his sway.
Fresh woes, O Maid divine,
Fresh trials must be thine:
And what must thou, Ladurlad, yet endure!
But let your hearts be strong,
And rise against all wrong,
For Providence is just, and virtue is secure.

2

They, little deeming that the fatal day
Was come, beheld where through the morning sky
A Ship of Heaven drew nigh.
Onward they watch it steer its steady flight;
Till wondering, they espy
Old Casyapa, the Sire of Gods, alight.
But when Ereenia saw the Sire appear,
At that unwonted and unwelcome sight
His heart received a sudden shock of fear:
Thy presence doth its doleful tidings tell,
O Father! cried the startled Glendoveer,
The dreadful hour is near! I know it well! [Gods
Not for less import would the Sire of Forsake his ancient and august abodes.

3

Even so, serene the immortal Sire replies;
Soon like an earthquake will ye feel the blow
Which consummates the mighty sacrifice:
And this World, and its Heaven, and all therein,
Are then Kehama's. To the second ring
Of these seven Spheres, the Swerga-King,
Even now, prepares for flight,
Beyond the circle of the conquer'd world,
Beyond the Rajah's might.
Ocean, that clips this inmost of the Spheres,
And girds it round with everlasting roar,
Set like a gem appears
Within that bending shore.
Thither fly all the Sons of heavenly race:
I too forsake mine ancient dwelling-place. [go:
And now, O Child and Father, ye must
Take up the burthen of your woe,
And wander once again below.

With patient heart hold onward to the end, . .
Be true unto yourselves, and bear in mind [friend;
That every God is still the good Man's
And when the Wicked have their day assign'd,
Then they who suffer bravely save mankind.

4

Oh tell me, cried Ereenia, for from thee
Nought can be hidden, when the end will be!
Seek not to know, old Casyapa replied,
What pleaseth Heaven to hide.
Dark is the abyss of Time,
But light enough to guide your steps is given;
Whatever weal or woe betide,
Turn never from the way of truth aside,
And leave the event, in holy hope, to Heaven.
The moment is at hand, no more delay,
Ascend the etherial bark, and go your way;
And Ye, of heavenly nature, follow me.

5

The will of Heaven be done, Ladurlad cried,
Nor more the man replied;
But placed his daughter in the etherial bark,
Then took his seat beside.
There was no word at parting, no adieu.
Down from that empyreal height they flew:
One groan Ladurlad breathed, yet utter'd not,
When, to his heart and brain,
The fiery Curse again like lightning shot.
And now on earth the Sire and Child alight,
Up soar'd the Ship of Heaven, and sail'd away from sight.

6

O ye immortal Bowers,
Where hitherto the Hours
Have led their dance of happiness for aye,
With what a sense of woe
Do ye expect the blow,
And see your heavenly dwellers driven away!
Lo! where the aunnay-birds of graceful mien,
Whose milk-white forms were seen,
Lovely as Nymphs, your ancient trees between,
And by your silent springs,
With melancholy cry
Now spread unwilling wings;
Their stately necks reluctant they protend,
And through the sullen sky,
To other worlds, their mournful progress bend.

7

The affrighted gales to-day
O'er their beloved streams no longer play,
The streams of Paradise have ceased to flow;
The Fountain-Tree withholds its diamond shower,
In this portentous hour. . .
This dolorous hour, . . this universal woe.
Where is the Palace, whose far-flashing beams,
With streaks and streams of ever-varying light,
Brighten'd the polar night
Around the frozen North's extremest shore?
Gone like a morning rainbow, . . like a dream, . .
A star that shoots and falls, and then is seen no more.

8

Now! now! . . Before the Golden Palaces,
The Bramin strikes the inevitable hour.
The fatal blow is given,
That over Earth and Heaven
Confirms the Almighty Rajah in his power.
All evil Spirits then,
That roam the World about,
Or wander through the sky,
Set up a joyful shout.
The Asuras and the Giants join the cry;
The damn'd in Padalon acclaim
Their hoped Deliverer's name;
Heaven trembles with the thunder-drowning sound;
Back starts affrighted Ocean from the shore,
And the adamantine vaults and brazen floor
Of Hell are shaken with the roar.
Up rose the Rajah through the conquer'd sky,
To seize the Swerga for his proud abode;
Myriads of evil Genii round him fly,
As royally on wings of winds he rode,
And scaled high Heaven, triumphant like a God.

XIII. THE RETREAT

1

Around her Father's neck the Maiden lock'd
Her arms, when that portentous blow was given;
Clinging to him she heard the dread uproar,
And felt the shuddering shock which ran through Heaven;
Earth underneath them rock'd,
Her strong foundations heaving in commotion,
Such as wild winds upraise in raving Ocean,
As though the solid base were rent asunder.
And lo! where, storming the astonish'd sky,
Kehama and his evil host ascend!
Before them rolls the thunder,
Ten thousand thousand lightnings round them fly,
Upward the lengthening pageantries aspire,
Leaving from Earth to Heaven a widening wake of fire.

2

When the wild uproar was at length allay'd,
And Earth recovering from the shock was still,
Thus to her father spake the imploring Maid:
Oh! by the love which we so long have borne
Each other, and we ne'er shall cease to bear, . .
Oh! by the sufferings we have shared,
And must not cease to share, . .
One boon I supplicate in this dread hour,
One consolation in this hour of woe!
Father, thou hast it in thy power,
Thou wilt not, Father, sure refuse me now
The only comfort my poor heart can know.

3

O dearest, dearest Kailyal! with a smile
Of tenderness and anguish, he replied,
O best beloved, and to be loved the best,
Best worthy, . . set thy duteous heart at rest.
I know thy wish, and let what will betide,
Ne'er will I leave thee wilfully again.
My soul is strengthen'd to endure its pain;
Be thou in all my wanderings, still my guide;
Be thou, in all my sufferings, at my side.

4

The Maiden, at those welcome words, imprest
A passionate kiss upon her father's cheek! [seek
They look'd around them then as if to
Where they should turn, North, South, or East, or West,
Wherever to their vagrant feet seem'd best.
But, turning from the view her mournful eyes, [cries,
Oh, whither should we wander, Kailyal
Or wherefore seek in vain a place of rest?
Have we not here the Earth beneath our tread,
Heaven overhead,
A brook that winds through this sequester'd glade,
And yonder woods, to yield us fruit and shade?
The little all our wants require is nigh;
Hope we have none; . . why travel on in fear?
We cannot fly from Fate, and Fate will find us here.

5

'Twas a fair scene wherein they stood,
A green and sunny glade amid the wood,
And in the midst an aged Banian grew.
It was a goodly sight to see
That venerable tree,
For o'er the lawn, irregularly spread,
Fifty straight columns propt its lofty head;
And many a long depending shoot,
Seeking to strike its root,
Straight like a plummet, grew towards the ground.
Some on the lower boughs which crost their way,
Fixing their bearded fibres, round and round, [wound;
With many a ring and wild contortion
Some to the passing wind at times, with sway
Of gentle motion swung;
Others of younger growth, unmoved, were hung
Like stone-drops from the cavern's fretted height;
Beneath was smooth and fair to sight,
Nor weeds nor briars deform'd the natural floor,
And through the leafy cope which bower'd it o'er
Came gleams of chequer'd light.
So like a temple did it seem, that there
A pious heart's first impulse would be prayer.

6

A brook, with easy current, murmur'd near;
Water so cool and clear [well,
The peasants drink not from the humble
Which they with sacrifice of rural pride,
Have wedded to the cocoa-grove beside;
Nor tanks of costliest masonry dispense
To those in towns who dwell,
The work of Kings, in their beneficence.
Fed by perpetual springs, a small lagoon,
Pellucid, deep and still, in silence join'd
And swell'd the passing stream. Like burnish'd steel
Glowing, it lay beneath the eye of noon;
And when the breezes in their play,
Ruffled the darkening surface, then with gleam
Of sudden light, around the lotus stem
It rippled, and the sacred flowers that crown
The lakelet with their roseate beauty, ride
In easy waving rock'd, from side to side;
And as the wind upheaves
Their broad and buoyant weight, the glossy leaves [down.
Flap on the twinkling waters, up and

7

They built them here a bower, of jointed cane,
Strong for the needful use, and light and long
Was the slight framework rear'd, with little pain;
Lithe creepers, then, the wicker sides supply,
And the tall jungle-grass fit roofing gave
Beneath the genial sky.
And here did Kailyal, each returning day,
Pour forth libations from the brook to pay
The Spirits of her Sires their grateful rite;
In such libations pour'd in open glades,
Beside clear streams and solitary shades,
The Spirits of the virtuous dead delight.
And duly here, to Marriataly's praise,
The Maid, as with an angel's voice of song,
Poured her melodious lays
Upon the gales of even,
And gliding in religious dance along,
Moved graceful as the dark-eyed Nymphs of Heaven,
Such harmony to all her steps was given.

8

Thus ever, in her Father's doating eye,
Kailyal perform'd the customary rite;
He, patient of his burning pain the while,
Beheld her, and approved her pious toil;
And sometimes at the sight
A melancholy smile
Would gleam upon his aweful countenance.
He too by day and night, and every hour,
Paid to a higher Power his sacrifice;
An offering, not of ghee, or fruit, and rice,
Flower-crown, or blood; but of a heart subdued,
A resolute, unconquer'd fortitude,
An agony represt, a will resign'd,
To her, who, on her secret throne reclined,
Amid the Sea of Milk, by Veeshnoo's side,
Looks with an eye of mercy on mankind.
By the Preserver, with his power endued,
There Voomdavee beholds this lower clime,
And marks the silent sufferings of the good,
To recompense them in her own good time.

9

O force of faith! O strength of virtuous will!
Behold him in his endless martyrdom,
Triumphant still!
The Curse still burning in his heart and brain,
And yet doth he remain
Patient the while, and tranquil, and content!
The pious soul hath framed unto itself
A second nature, to exist in pain
As in its own allotted element.

10

Such strength the will reveal'd had given
This holy pair, such influxes of grace,
That to their solitary resting place
They brought the peace of Heaven.
Yea, all around was hallow'd! Danger, Fear,
Nor thought of evil ever enter'd here.
A charm was on the Leopard when he came
Within the circle of that mystic glade;
Submiss he crouch'd before the heavenly maid,
And offer'd to her touch his speckled side;
Or with arch'd back erect, and bending head,
And eyes half-closed for pleasure, would he stand,
Courting the pressure of her gentle hand.

11

Trampling his path through wood and brake,
And canes which crackling fall before his way,
And tassel-grass, whose silvery feathers play
O'ertopping the young trees,
On comes the Elephant, to slake
His thirst at noon in yon pellucid springs.
Lo! from his trunk upturn'd, aloft he flings
The grateful shower; and now
Plucking the broad-leaved bough
Of yonder plane, with wavey motion slow,
Fanning the languid air,
He moves it to and fro.
But when that form of beauty meets his sight,
The trunk its undulating motion stops,
From his forgetful hold the plane-branch drops,
Reverent he kneels, and lifts his rational eyes
To her as if in prayer;
And when she pours her angel voice in song,
Entranced he listens to the thrilling notes,
Till his strong temples, bathed with sudden dews,
Their fragrance of delight and love diffuse.

12

Lo! as the voice melodious floats around,
The Antelope draws near,
The Tigress leaves her toothless cubs to hear;
The Snake comes gliding from the secret brake,
Himself in fascination forced along
By that enchanting song;
The antic Monkies, whose wild gambols late,
When not a breeze waved the tall jungle grass,
Shook the whole wood, are hush'd, and silently
Hang on the cluster'd tree.
All things in wonder and delight are still;
Only at times the Nightingale is heard,
Not that in emulous skill that sweetest bird
Her rival strain would try,
A mighty songster, with the Maid to vie;
She only bore her part in powerful sympathy.

13

Well might they thus adore that heavenly Maid!
For never Nymph of Mountain,
Or Grove, or Lake, or Fountain,
With a diviner presence fill'd the shade.
No idle ornaments deface
Her natural grace,
Musk-spot, nor sandal-streak, nor scarlet stain,
Ear-drop nor chain, nor arm nor ankle-ring,
Nor trinketry on front, or neck, or breast
Marring the perfect form: she seem'd a thing
Of Heaven's prime uncorrupted work, a child
Of early nature undefiled,
A daughter of the years of innocence.
And therefore all things loved her. When she stood
Beside the glassy pool, the fish, that flies
Quick as an arrow from all other eyes,
Hover'd to gaze on her. The mother bird,
When Kailyal's step she heard,
Sought not to tempt her from her secret nest,
But hastening to the dear retreat, would fly
To meet and welcome her benignant eye.

14

Hope we have none, said Kailyal to her Sire. [Maid
Said she aright ? and had the mortal
No thoughts of heavenly aid, . .
No secret hopes her inmost heart to move [desire,
With longings of such deep and pure
As Vestal Maids, whose piety is love,
Feel in their ecstasies, when rapt above,
Their souls unto their heavenly Spouse aspire ? 221
Why else so often doth that searching eye
Roam through the scope of sky ?
Why, if she sees a distant speck on high,
Starts there that quick suffusion to her cheek ?
'Tis but the Eagle in his heavenly height;
Reluctant to believe, she hears his cry,
And marks his wheeling flight,
Then pensively averts her mournful sight.
Why ever else, at morn, that waking sigh, 230
Because the lovely form no more is nigh
Which hath been present to her soul all night;
And that injurious fear
Which ever, as it riseth, is represt,
Yet riseth still within her troubled breast, [veer !
That she no more shall see the Glendo-

15

Hath he forgotten me ? The wrongful thought
Would stir within her, and though still repell'd
With shame and self-reproaches, would recur.
Days after days unvarying come and go,
And neither friend nor foe 241
Approaches them in their sequester'd bower.
Maid of strange destiny ! but think not thou
Thou art forgotten now,
And hast no cause for farther hope or fear;
High-fated Maid, thou dost not know
What eyes watch over thee for weal and woe !
Even at this hour,
Searching the dark decrees divine,
Kehama, in the fulness of his power,
Perceives his thread of fate entwine with thine. 251
The Glendoveer, from his far sphere,
With love that never sleeps, beholds thee here,
And in the hour permitted will be near.
Dark Lorrinite on thee hath fix'd her sight,
And laid her wiles, to aid
Foul Arvalan when he shall next appear;
For well she ween'd his Spirit would renew [hate;
Old vengeance now, with unremitting
The Enchantress well that evil nature knew, 260
The accursed Spirit hath his prey in view;
And thus, while all their separate hopes pursue,
All work, unconsciously, the will of Fate.

16

Fate work'd its own the while. A band
Of Yoguees, as they roam'd the land
Seeking a spouse for Jaga-Naut their God,
Stray'd to this solitary glade,
And reach'd the bower wherein the Maid abode.
Wondering at form so fair, they deem'd the Power
Divine had led them to his chosen bride,
And seized and bore her from her Father's side. 271

XIV. JAGA-NAUT

1

Joy in the City of great Jaga-Naut!
Joy in the seven-headed Idol's shrine!
A virgin-bride his ministers have brought,
A mortal maid, in form and face divine,
Peerless among all daughters of mankind;
Search'd they the world again from East to West,
In endless quest,
Seeking the fairest and the best,
No maid so lovely might they hope to find; . .
For she hath breathed celestial air,
And heavenly food hath been her fare,
And heavenly thoughts and feelings give her face
That heavenly grace.
Joy in the City of great Jaga-Naut,
Joy in the seven-headed Idol's shrine!
The fairest Maid his Yoguees sought,
A fairer than the fairest have they brought,
A maid of charms surpassing human thought,
A maid divine.

2

Now bring ye forth the Chariot of the God!
Bring him abroad,
That through the swarming City he may ride;
And by his side
Place ye the Maid of more than mortal grace,
The Maid of perfect form and heavenly face;
Set her aloft in triumph, like a bride
Upon the Bridal Car,
And spread the joyful tidings wide and far, . .
Spread it with trump and voice
That all may hear, and all who hear rejoice, . .
Great Jaga-Naut hath found his mate! the God
Will ride abroad!
To-night will he go forth from his abode!
Ye myriads who adore him,
Prepare the way before him!

3

Uprear'd on twenty wheels elate,
Huge as a Ship, the Bridal Car appear'd;
Loud creak its ponderous wheels, as through the gate [load.
A thousand Bramins drag the enormous
There throned aloft in state,
The Image of the seven-headed God
Came forth from his abode; and at his side
Sate Kailyal like a bride.
A bridal statue rather might she seem,
For she regarded all things like a dream,
Having no thought, nor fear, nor will, nor aught
Save hope and faith, that lived within her still.

4

O silent night, how have they startled thee
With the brazen trumpet's blare;
And thou, O Moon! whose quiet light serene
Filleth wide heaven, and bathing hill and wood, [flood,
Spreads o'er the peaceful valley like a
How have they dimm'd thee with the torches' glare,
Which round yon moving pageant flame and flare,
As the wild rout, with deafening song and shout,
Fling their long flashes out,
That, like infernal lightnings, fire the air.

5

A thousand pilgrims strain
Arm, shoulder, breast and thigh, with might and main,
To drag that sacred wain,
And scarce can draw along the enormous load.
Prone fall the frantic votaries in its road,
And calling on the God,
Their self-devoted bodies there they lay
To pave his chariot-way.
On Jaga-Naut they call,
The ponderous Car rolls on, and crushes all.
Through flesh and bones it ploughs its dreadful path.
Groans rise unheard: the dying cry,
And death and agony
Are trodden under foot by yon mad throng,
Who follow close, and thrust the deadly wheels along.

6

Pale grows the Maid at this accursed sight;
The yells which round her rise
Have roused her with affright,
And fear hath given to her dilated eyes
A wilder light.
Where shall those eyes be turn'd? she knows not where!
Downward they dare not look, for there
Is death, and horror, and despair;
Nor can her patient looks to Heaven repair,
For the huge Idol over her, in air,
Spreads his seven hideous heads, and wide
Extends their snaky necks on every side;
And all around, behind, before,
The Bridal Car, is the raging rout,
With frantic shout, and deafening roar,
Tossing the torches' flames about.
And the double double peals of the drum are there,
And the startling burst of the trumpet's blare;
And the gong, that seems, with its thunders dread
To astound the living, and waken the dead.
The ear-strings throb as if they were rent,
And the eyelids drop as stunned and spent.
Fain would the Maid have kept them fast,
But open they start at the crack of the blast.

7

Where art thou, Son of Heaven, Ereenia! where
In this dread hour of horror and despair?
Thinking on him, she strove her fear to quell,
If he be near me, then will all be well;
And, if he reck not for my misery,
Let come the worst, it matters not to me.
Repel that wrongful thought,
O Maid! thou feelest, but believest it not;
It is thine own imperfect nature's fault
That lets one doubt of him arise within;
And this the Virgin knew; and like a sin,
Repell'd the thought, and still believed him true;
And summon'd up her spirit to endure
All forms of fear, in that firm trust secure.

8

She needs that faith, she needs that consolation,
For now the Car hath measured back its track
Of death, and hath re-enter'd now its station.

There, in the Temple-court with song and dance,
A harlot-band, to meet the Maid, advance.
The drum hath ceased its peals; the trump and gong
Are still; the frantic crowd forbear their yells;
And sweet it was to hear the voice of song,
And the sweet music of their girdle-bells,
Armlets and anklets, that, with cheerful sound,
Symphonious tinkled as they wheel'd around.

9

They sung a bridal measure,
A song of pleasure,
A hymn of joyaunce and of gratulation.
Go, chosen One, they cried,
Go, happy bride!
For thee the God descends in expectation!
For thy dear sake
He leaves his Heaven, O Maid of matchless charms!
Go, happy One, the bed divine partake,
And fill his longing arms!
Thus to the inner fane,
With circling dance and hymeneal strain,
The astonish'd Maid they led,
And there they laid her on the bridal bed.
Then forth they go, and close the Temple-gate,
And leave the wretched Kailyal to her fate.

10

Where art thou, Son of Heaven, Ereenia, where?
From the loathed bed she starts, and in the air
Looks up, as if she thought to find him there;
Then, in despair,
Anguish and agony, and hopeless prayer,
Prostrate she laid herself upon the floor.
There trembling as she lay,
The Bramin of the fane advanced
And came to seize his prey.
But as the abominable Priest drew nigh,
A power invisible opposed his way;
Starting, he utter'd wildly a death-cry,
And fell. At that the Maid all eagerly
Lifted in hope her head;
She thought her own deliverer had been near;
When lo! with other life re-animate,
She saw the dead arise,
And in the fiendish joy within his eyes,
She knew the hateful Spirit who look'd through
Their specular orbs, . . clothed in the flesh of man,
She knew the accursed soul of Arvalan.

11

Where art thou, Son of Heaven, Ereenia, where?
But not in vain, with sudden shriek of fear,
She calls Ereenia now; the Glendoveer
Is here! Upon the guilty sight he burst
Like lightning from a cloud, and caught the accurst,
Bore him to the roof aloft, and on the floor
With vengeance dash'd him, quivering there in gore.
Lo! from the pregnant air, . . heart-withering sight,
There issued forth the dreadful Lorrinite.
Seize him! the Enchantress cried;
A host of Demons at her word appear,
And like tornado winds, from every side
At once they rush upon the Glendoveer.
Alone against a legion, little here
Avails his single might,

Nor that celestial faulchion, which in fight
So oft had put the rebel race to flight.
There are no Gods on earth to give him aid;
Hemm'd round, he is overpower'd, beat down, and bound,
And at the feet of Lorrinite is laid.

12

Meantime the scatter'd members of the slain,
Obedient to her mighty voice assum'd
Their vital form again,
And that foul Spirit upon vengeance bent,
Fled to the fleshly tenement.
Lo! here, quoth Lorrinite, thou seest thy foe!
Him in the Ancient Sepulchres, below
The billows of the Ocean will I lay;
Gods are there none to help him now, and there
For Man there is no way.
To that dread scene of durance and despair,
Asuras, bear your enemy! I go
To chain him in the Tombs. Meantime do thou,
Freed from thy foe, and now secure from fear,
Son of Kehama, take thy pleasure here.

13

Her words the accursed race obey'd;
Forth with a sound like rushing winds they fled,
And of all aid from Earth or Heaven bereft,
Alone with Arvalan the Maid was left.
But in that hour of agony, the Maid
Deserted not herself; her very dread
Had calm'd her; and her heart
Knew the whole horror, and its only part.

Yamen, receive me undefiled! she said,
And seized a torch, and fired the bridal bed.
Up ran the rapid flames; on every side
They find their fuel wheresoe'er they spread;
Thin hangings, fragrant gums, and odorous wood,
That piled like sacrificial altars stood.
Around they run, and upward they aspire,
And, lo! the huge Pagoda lined with fire.

14

The wicked Soul, who had assumed again
A form of sensible flesh for his foul will,
Still bent on base revenge and baffled still,
Felt that corporeal shape alike to pain
Obnoxious as to pleasure: forth he flew,
Howling and scorch'd by the devouring flame;
Accursed Spirit! Still condemn'd to rue,
The act of sin and punishment the same.
Freed from his loathsome touch, a natural dread
Came on the self-devoted, and she drew
Back from the flames, which now toward her spread,
And, like a living monster, seem'd to dart
Their hungry tongues toward their shrinking prey.
Soon she subdued her heart;
O Father! she exclaim'd, there was no way
But this! And thou, Ereenia, who for me
Sufferest, my soul shall bear thee compony.

15

So having said, she knit
Her body up to work her soul's desire,
And rush at once among the thickest fire.

A sudden cry withheld her, . . Kailyal, stay!
Child! Daughter! I am here! the voice exclaims,
And from the gate, unharm'd, through smoke and flames,
Like as a God, Ladurlad made his way;
Wrapt his preserving arms around, and bore
His Child, uninjured, o'er the burning floor.

XV. THE CITY OF BALY

1

KAILYAL

Ereenia!

LADURLAD

Nay, let no reproachful thought
Wrong his heroic heart! The Evil Powers
Have the dominion o'er this wretched World, [here.
And no good Spirit now can venture

KAILYAL

Alas, my Father! he hath ventured here,
And saved me from one horror. But the Powers
Of Evil beat him down, and bore away
To some dread scene of durance and despair;
The Ancient Tombs, methought their mistress said,
Beneath the ocean-waves; no way for Man
Is there; and Gods, she boasted, there are none
On Earth to help him now.

LADURLAD

Is that her boast?
And hath she laid him in the Ancient Tombs,
Relying that the Waves will guard him there? [ness,
Short-sighted are the eyes of Wicked-
And all its craft but folly. Oh my child!
The Curses of the Wicked are upon me,
And the immortal Deities, who see
And suffer all things for their own wise end,
Have made them blessings to us!

KAILYAL

Then thou knowest
Where they have borne him?

LADURLAD

To the Sepulchres
Of the Ancient Kings, which Baly in his power
Made in primeval times; and built above them
A City, like the Cities of the Gods,
Being like a God himself. For many an age
Hath Ocean warr'd against his Palaces,
Till, overwhelm'd, they lie beneath the waves,
Not overthrown, so well the aweful Chief
Had laid their deep foundations. Rightly said
The Accursed, that no way for man was there,
But not like man am I!

2

Up from the ground the Maid exultant sprung,
And clapp'd her happy hands in attitude
Of thanks to Heaven, and flung
Her arms around her Father's neck, and stood
Struggling awhile for utterance, with excess
Of hope and pious thankfulness.
Come . . come! she cried, Oh let us not delay, . . [away!
He is in torments there, . . away! . .

3

Long time they travell'd on; at dawn of day
Still setting forward with the earliest light,
Nor ceasing from their way
Till darkness closed the night.
Short refuge from the noontide heat,
Reluctantly compell'd, the Maiden took,
And ill her indefatigable feet
Could that brief respite brook.
Hope kept her up, and her intense desire
Supports that heart which ne'er at danger quails,
Those feet which never tire,
That frame which never fails.

4

Their talk was of the City of the days
Of old, Earth's wonder once, and of the fame
Of Baly its great founder, . . he whose name
In ancient story and in poet's praise,
Liveth and flourisheth for endless glory,
Because his might
Put down the wrong, and aye upheld the right.
Till for ambition, as old sages tell,
At length the universal Monarch fell:
For he too, having made the World his own,
Then in his pride, had driven
The Devetas from Heaven,
And seized triumphantly the Swerga throne.
The Incarnate came before the Mighty One,
In dwarfish stature, and in mien obscure;
The sacred cord he bore,
And ask'd, for Brama's sake, a little boon, [more.
Three steps of Baly's ample reign, no
Poor was the boon required, and poor was he
Who begg'd, . . a little wretch it seem'd to be; [prayer.
But Baly ne'er refused a suppliant's
He on the Dwarf cast down
A glance of pity in contemptuous mood,
And bade him take the boon,
And measure where he would.

5

Lo, Son of giant birth,
I take my grant! the Incarnate Power replies.
With his first step he measured o'er the Earth,
The second spann'd the skies.
Three paces thou hast granted,
Twice have I set my footstep, Veeshnoo cries,
Where shall the third be planted?

6

Then Baly knew the God, and at his feet,
In homage due, he laid his humbled head.
Mighty art thou, O Lord of Earth and Heaven,
Mighty art thou! he said,
Be merciful, and let me be forgiven.
He ask'd for mercy of the Merciful,
And mercy for his virtue's sake was shown.
For though he was cast down to Padalon,
Yet there, by Yamen's throne,
Doth Baly sit in majesty and might,
To judge the dead, and sentence them aright.
And forasmuch as he was still the friend
Of righteousness, it is permitted him,
Yearly, from those drear regions to ascend,
And walk the Earth, that he may hear his name
Still hymn'd and honour'd by the grateful voice
Of humankind, and in his fame rejoice.

7

Such was the talk they held upon their way,
Of him to whose old City they were bound; [day
And now, upon their journey, many a
Had risen and closed, and many a week gone round,
And many a realm and region had they pass'd,
When now the Ancient Towers appear'd at last.

8

Their golden summits in the noon-day light,
Shone o'er the dark green deep that roll'd between,
For domes, and pinnacles, and spires were seen
Peering above the sea, . . a mournful sight!
Well might the sad beholder ween from thence
What works of wonder the devouring wave
Had swallow'd there, when monuments so brave
Bore record of their old magnificence.
And on the sandy shore, beside the verge
Of Ocean, here and there, a rock-hewn fane
Resisted in its strength the surf and surge
That on their deep foundations beat in vain.
In solitude the Ancient Temples stood,
Once resonant with instrument and song,
And solemn dance of festive multitude;
Now as the weary ages pass along,
Hearing no voice save of the Ocean flood,
Which roars for ever on the restless shores;
Or, visiting their solitary caves,
The lonely sound of winds, that moan around
Accordant to the melancholy waves.

9

With reverence did the travellers see
The works of ancient days, and silently
Approach the shore. Now on the yellow sand,
Where round their feet the rising surges part,
They stand. Ladurlad's heart
Exulted in his wondrous destiny.
To Heaven he raised his hand
In attitude of stern heroic pride;
Oh what a power, he cried,
Thou dreadful Rajah, doth thy curse impart!
I thank thee now! . . Then turning to the Maid,
Thou seest how far and wide
Yon Towers extend, he said,
My search must needs be long. Meantime the flood
Will cast thee up thy food, . .
And in the Chambers of the Rock by night,
Take thou thy safe abode.
No prowling beast to harm thee, or affright,
Can enter there; but wrap thyself with with care
From the foul Birds obscene that thirst for blood;
For in such caverns doth the Bat delight
To have its haunts. Do thou with stone and shout,
Ere thou liest down at evening, scare them out,
And in this robe of mine involve thy feet.
Duly commend us both to Heaven in prayer, [sweet!
Be of good heart, and may thy sleep be

10

So saying, he put back his arm, and gave
The cloth which girt his loins, and press'd her hand
With fervent love, then from the sand
Advanced into the sea; the coming Wave
Which knew Kehama's curse, before his way
Started, and on he went as on dry land,
And still around his path the waters parted.
She stands upon the shore, where sea-weeds play,
Lashing her polish'd ankles, and the spray
Which off her Father, like a rainbow, fled,
Falls on her like a shower; there Kailyal stands,
And sees the billows rise above his head.
She at the startling sight forgot the power
The Curse had given him, and held forth her hands
Imploringly, . . her voice was on the wind,
And the deaf Ocean o'er Ladurlad closed.
Soon she recall'd his destiny to mind,
And shaking off that natural fear, composed
Her soul with prayer, to wait the event resign'd.

11

Alone, upon the solitary strand,
The lovely one is left; behold her go,
Pacing with patient footsteps, to and fro,
Along the bending sand.
Save her, ye Gods! from Evil Powers, and here
From man she need not fear:
For never Traveller comes near
These aweful ruins of the days of yore,
Nor fisher's bark, nor venturous mariner,
Approach the sacred shore.
All day, she walk'd the beach, at night she sought
The Chamber of the Rock; with stone and shout
Assail'd the Bats obscene, and scared them out;
Then in her Father's robe involved her feet,
And wrapt her mantle round to guard her head,
And laid her down; the rock was Kailyal's bed,
Her chamber-lamps were in the starry sky,
The winds and waters were her lullaby.

12

Be of good heart, and may thy sleep be sweet,
Ladurlad said: . . Alas! that cannot be
To one whose days are days of misery.
How often did she stretch her hands to greet
Ereenia, rescued in the dreams of night!
How oft amid the vision of delight,
Fear in her heart all is not as it seems;
Then from unsettled slumber start, and hear
The Winds that moan above, the Waves below!
Thou hast been call'd, O Sleep! the friend of Woe,
But 'tis the happy who have call'd thee so.

13

Another day, another night are gone,
A second passes, and a third wanes on.
So long she paced the shore,
So often on the beach she took her stand,
That the wild Sea-Birds knew her, and no more
Fled, when she pass'd beside them on the strand.
Bright shine the golden summits in the light
Of the noon-sun, and lovelier far by night
Their moonlight glories o'er the sea they shed:

Fair is the dark-green deep: by night and day
Unvex'd with storms, the peaceful billows play,
As when they closed above Ladurlad's head;
The firmament above is bright and clear;
The sea-fowl, lords of water, air, and land,
Joyous alike upon the wing appear,
Or when they ride the waves, or walk the sand;
Beauty and light and joy are every where;
There is no sadness and no sorrow here,
Save what that single human breast contains,
But oh! what hopes, and fears, and pains are there!

14

Seven miserable days the expectant Maid,
From earliest dawn till evening, watch'd the shore;
Hope left her then; and in her heart she said,
Never should she behold her Father more.

XVI. THE ANCIENT SEPULCHRES

1

When the broad Ocean on Ladurlad's head
Had closed and arch'd him o'er,
With steady tread he held his way
Adown the sloping shore.
The dark green waves with emerald hue,
Imbue the beams of day,
And on the wrinkled sand below,
Rolling their mazy network to and fro,
Light shadows shift and play.
The hungry Shark, at scent of prey,
Toward Ladurlad darted;
Beholding then that human form erect,
How like a God the depths he trod,
Appall'd the monster started,
And in his fear departed.
Onward Ladurlad went with heart elate,
And now hath reach'd the Ancient City's gate.

2

Wondering he stood awhile to gaze
Upon the works of elder days.
The brazen portals open stood,
Even as the fearful multitude
Had left them, when they fled
Before the rising flood.
High over-head, sublime,
The mighty gateway's storied roof was spread,
Dwarfing the puny piles of younger time.
With the deeds of days of yore
That ample roof was sculptured o'er,
And many a godlike form there met his his eye,
And many an emblem dark of mystery.
Through these wide portals oft had Baly rode
Triumphant from his proud abode,
When, in his greatness, he bestrode
The Aullay, hugest of four-footed kind,
The Aullay-Horse, that in his force,
With elephantine trunk, could bind
And lift the elephant, and on the wind
Whirl him away, with sway and swing,
Even like a pebble from the practised sling.

3

Those streets which never, since the days of yore,
By human footstep had been visited,
Those streets which never more
A human foot shall tread,
Ladurlad trod. In sun-light and sea-green,
The thousand Palaces were seen

Of that proud City, whose superb abodes
Seem'd rear'd by Giants for the immortal Gods.
How silent and how beautiful they stand,
Like things of Nature! the eternal rocks
Themselves not firmer. Neither hath the sand
Drifted within their gates and choak'd their doors,
Nor slime defiled their pavements and their floors.
Did then the Ocean wage
His war for love and envy, not in rage,
O thou fair City, that he spared thee thus?
Art thou Varounin's capital and court,
Where all the Sea-Gods for delight resort,
A place too godlike to be held by us,
The poor degenerate children of the Earth?
So thought Ladurlad, as he look'd around,
Weening to hear the sound
Of Mermaid's shell, and song
Of choral throng from some imperial hall,
Wherein the Immortal Powers at festival,
Their high carousals keep;
But all is silence dread,
Silence profound and dead,
The everlasting stillness of the Deep.

4

Through many a solitary street,
And silent market-place, and lonely square,
Arm'd with the mighty Curse, behold him fare.
And now his feet attain that royal fane
Where Baly held of old his aweful reign.
What once had been the Gardens spread around,
Fair Gardens, once which wore perpetual green,
Where all sweet flowers through all the year were found,
And all fair fruits were through all seasons seen;
A place of Paradise, where each device
Of emulous Art with Nature strove to vie;
And Nature on her part,
Call'd forth new powers wherewith to vanquish Art.
The Swerga-God himself, with envious eye,
Survey'd those peerless gardens in their prime;
Nor ever did the Lord of Light,
Who circles Earth and Heaven upon his way,
Behold from eldest time a goodlier sight
Than were the groves which Baly, in his might,
Made for his chosen place of solace and delight.

5

It was a Garden still beyond all price,
Even yet it was a place of Paradise;
For where the mighty Ocean could not spare,
There had he with his own creation,
Sought to repair his work of devastation.
And here were coral bowers,
And grots of madrepores,
And banks of sponge, as soft and fair to eye
As e'er was mossy bed
Whereon the Wood Nymphs lie
With languid limbs in summer's sultry hours.
Here too were living flowers
Which, like a bud compacted,
Their purple cups contracted,
And now in open blossom spread,
Stretch'd like green anthers many a seeking head.

And arborets of jointed stone were there,
And plants of fibres fine, as silkworm's thread; [hair
Yea, beautiful as Mermaid's golden
Upon the waves dispread.
Others that, like the broad banana growing.
Raised their long wrinkled leaves of purple hue,
Like streamers wide out-flowing.
And whatsoe'er the depths of Ocean hide
From human eyes, Ladurlad there espied,
Trees of the deep, and shrubs and fruits and flowers,
As fair as ours,
Wherewith the Sea-Nymphs love their locks to braid,
When to their father's hall, at festival
Repairing they, in emulous array,
Their charms display,
To grace the banquet, and the solemn day.

6

The golden fountains had not ceased to flow:
And where they mingled with the briny Sea,
There was a sight of wonder and delight,
To see the fish, like birds in air,
Above Ladurlad flying.
Round those strange waters they repair,
Their scarlet fins outspread and plying.
They float with gentle hovering there;
And now upon those little wings,
As if to dare forbidden things,
With wilful purpose bent,
Swift as an arrow from a bow,
They shoot across, and to and fro,
In rapid glance, like lightning go
Through that unwonted element.

7

Almost in scenes so wondrous fair,
Ladurlad had forgot
The mighty cause which led him there;
His busy eye was every where,
His mind had lost all thought;
His heart, surrender'd to the joys
Of sight, was happy as a boy's.
But soon the awakening thought recurs
Of him who in the Sepulchres,
Hopeless of human aid, in chains is laid;
And her who on the solitary shore,
By night and day her weary watch will keep,
Till she shall see them issuing from the deep.

8

Now hath Ladurlad reach'd the Court
Of the great Palace of the King; its floor
Was of the marble rock; and there before
The imperial door,
A mighty Image on the steps was seen,
Of stature huge, of countenance serene.
A crown and sceptre at his feet were laid;
One hand a scroll display'd,
The other pointed there, that all might see;
My name is Death, it said,
In mercy have the Gods appointed me.
Two brazen gates beneath him night and day
Stood open; and within them you behold
Descending steps, which in the living stone
Were hewn, a spacious way
Down to the Chambers of the Kings of old.

9

Trembling with hope, the adventurous man descended.
The sea-green light of day
Not far along the vault extended;
But where the slant reflection ended,
Another light was seen
Of red and fiery hue,
That with the water blended,
And gave the secrets of the Tombs to view.

10

Deep in the marble rock, the Hall
Of Death was hollow'd out, a chamber wide,
Low-roof'd, and long; on either side,
Each in his own alcove, and on his throne,
The Kings of old were seated: in his hand
Each held the sceptre of command,
From whence, across that scene of endless night,
A carbuncle diffused its everlasting light.

11

So well had the embalmers done their part
With spice and precious unguents to imbue
The perfect corpse, that each had still the hue
Of living man, and every limb was still
Supple and firm and full, as when of yore
Its motion answer'd to the moving will.
The robes of royalty which once they wore,
Long since had moulder'd off and left them bare:
Naked upon their thrones there, behold them
Statues of actual flesh, . . a fearful sight!
Their large and rayless eyes
Dimly reflecting to that gem-born light,
Glazed, fix'd, and meaningless, . . yet, open wide,
Their ghastly balls belied
The mockery of life in all beside.

12

But if amid these chambers drear,
Death were a sight of shuddering and of fear,
Life was a thing of stranger horror here.
For at the farther end, in yon alcove,
Where Baly should have lain, had he obey'd
Man's common lot, behold Ereenia laid.
Strong fetters link him to the rock; his eye
Now rolls and widens, as with effort vain
He strives to break the chain,
Now seems to brood upon his misery.
Before him couch'd there lay
One of the mighty monsters of the deep,
Whom Lorrinite encountering on the way,
There station'd, his perpetual guard to keep;
In the sport of wanton power, she charm'd him there,
As if to mock the Glendoveer's despair.

13

Upward his form was human, save that here
The skin was cover'd o'er with scale on scale
Compact, a panoply of natural mail.
His mouth, from ear to ear,
Weapon'd with triple teeth, extended wide,
And tusks on either side;
A double snake below, he roll'd
His supple length behind in many a sinuous fold.

14

With red and kindling eye, the Beast beholds
A living man draw nigh,
And rising on his folds,
In hungry joy awaits the expected feast,
His mouth half-open, and his teeth unsheath'd.
Then on he sprung, and in his scaly arms
Seized him, and fasten'd on his neck, to suck,
With greedy lips the warm life-blood: and sure
But for the mighty power of magic charms,
As easily as, in the blithesome hour
Of spring, a child doth crop the meadow-flower,
Piecemeal those claws
Had rent their victim, and those armed jaws stood,
Snapt him in twain. Naked Ladurlad
Yet fearless and unharm'd in this dread strife,
So well Kehama's Curse had charm'd his fated life.

15

He too, . . for anger, rising at the sight
Of him he sought, in such strange thrall confined,
With desperate courage fired Ladurlad's mind, . .
He too unto the fight himself addrest,
And grappling breast to breast,
With foot firm-planted stands,
And seized the monster's throat with both his hands.
Vainly, with throttling grasp, he prest
The impenetrable scales;
And lo! the Guard rose up, and round his foe,
With gliding motion, wreath'd his lengthening coils,
Then tighten'd all their folds with stress and strain.
Nought would the raging Tiger's strength avail toils;
If once involved within those mighty
The arm'd Rhinoceros, so clasp'd, in vain
Had trusted to his hide of rugged mail,
His bones all broken, and the breath of life
Crush'd from the lungs, in that unequal strife. break
Again, and yet again, he sought to
The impassive limbs; but when the Monster found
His utmost power was vain,
A moment he relax'd in every round,
Then knit his coils again with closer strain,
And, bearing forward, forced him to the ground.

16

Ereenia groan'd in anguish at the sight
Of this dread fight: once more the Glendoveer
Essay'd to break his bonds, and fear
For that brave father who had sought him here,
Stung him to wilder strugglings. From the rock
He raised himself half-up, with might and main
Pluck'd at the adamantine chain,
And now with long and unrelaxing strain,
In obstinate effort of indignant strength,
Labour'd and strove in vain;
Till his immortal sinews fail'd at length;
And yielding, with an inward groan, to fate,
Despairingly, he let himself again
Fall prostrate on his prison-bed of stone, weight.
Body and chain alike with lifeless

17

Struggling they lay in mortal fray
All day, while day was in our upper sphere,
For light of day
And natural darkness never entered here;
All night, with unabated might,
They waged the unremitting fight.
A second day, a second night,
With furious will they wrestled still.
The third came on, the fourth is gone;
Another comes, another goes,
And yet no respite, no repose!
But day and night, and night and day,
Involv'd in mortal strife they lay;
Six days and nights have pass'd away,
And still they wage, with mutual rage,
The unremitting fray.
With mutual rage their war they wage,
But not with mutual will;
For when the seventh morning came,
The monster's worn and wearied frame
In this strange contest fails;
And weaker, weaker, every hour,
He yields beneath strong Nature's power,
For now the Curse prevails.

18

Sometimes the Beast sprung up to bear
His foe aloft; and trusting there
To shake him from his hold,
Relax'd the rings that wreath'd him round;
But on his throat Ladurlad hung
And weigh'd him to the ground;
And if they sink, or if they float,
Alike with stubborn clasp he clung,
Tenacious of his grasp;
For well he knew with what a power,
Exempt from Nature's laws,
The Curse had arm'd him for this hour;
And in the monster's gasping jaws,
And in his hollow eye,
Well could Ladurlad now descry
The certain signs of victory.

19

And now the Beast no more can keep
His painful watch; his eyes, opprest,
Are fainting for their natural sleep;
His living flesh and blood must rest,
The Beast must sleep or die.
Then he, full faint and languidly,
Unwreathes his rings and strives to fly,
And still retreating, slowly trails
His stiff and heavy length of scales.
But that unweariable foe,
With will relentless follows still;
No breathing time, no pause of fight
He gives, but presses on his flight;
Along the vaulted chambers, and the ascent
Up to the emerald-tinted light of day,
He harasses his way,
Till lifeless, underneath his grasp,
The huge Sea-Monster lay.

20

That obstinate work is done; Ladurlad cried,
One labour yet remains!
And thoughtfully he eyed
Ereenia's ponderous chains;
And with faint effort, half-despairing, tried
The rivets deep in-driven. Instinctively,
As if in search of aid, he look'd around:
Oh, then how gladly, in the near alcove,
Fallen on the ground its lifeless Lord beside,
The crescent scymitar he spied,
Whose cloudy blade, with potent spells imbued,
Had lain so many an age unhurt in solitude.

21

Joyfully springing there
He seized the weapon, and with eager stroke
Hew'd at the chain; the force was dealt in vain,
For not as if through yielding air
Pass'd the descending scymitar,
Its deaden'd way the heavy water broke;
Yet it bit deep. Again, with both his hands,
He wields the blade, and dealt a surer blow.
The baser metal yields
To that fine edge, and lo! the Glendoveer
Rises and snaps the half-sever'd links, and stands
Freed from his broken bands.

XVII. BALY

1

This is the appointed night,
The night of joy and consecrated mirth,
When from his judgement-seat in Padalon,
By Yamen's throne,
Baly goes forth, that he may walk the Earth
Unseen, and hear his name
Still hymn'd and honour'd by the grateful voice
Of humankind, and in his fame rejoice.
Therefore from door to door, and street to street,
With willing feet,
Shaking their firebrands, the glad children run;
Baly! great Baly! they acclaim,
Where'er they run they bear the mighty name,
Where'er they meet,
Baly! great Baly! still their choral tongues repeat.
Therefore at every door the votive flame
Through pendant lanterns sheds its painted light,
And rockets hissing upward through the sky,
Fall like a shower of stars
From Heaven's black canopy.
Therefore, on yonder mountain's templed height,
The brazen caldron blazes through the night.
Huge as a Ship that travels the main sea
Is that capacious brass; its wick as tall
As is the mast of some great admiral.
Ten thousand votaries bring
Camphor and ghee to feed the sacred flame;
And while, through regions round, the nations see
Its fiery pillar curling high in heaven,
Baly! great Baly! they exclaim,
For ever hallowed be his blessed name!
Honour and praise to him for ever more be given!

2

Why art not thou among the festive throng,
Baly, O righteous Judge! to hear thy fame?
Still, as of yore, with pageantry and song,
The glowing streets along,
They celebrate thy name;
Baly! great Baly! still
The grateful habitants of Earth acclaim,
Baly! great Baly! still
The ringing walls and echoing towers proclaim.

From yonder mountain the portentous flame
Still blazes to the nations as before;
All things appear to human eyes the same,
As perfect as of yore;
To human eyes, . . but how unlike to thine!
Thine which were wont to see
The Company divine,
That with their presence came to honour thee!
For all the blessed ones of mortal birth
Who have been clothed with immortality,
From the eight corners of the Earth,
From the Seven Worlds assembling, all
Wont to attend thy solemn festival.
Then did thine eyes behold
The wide air peopled with that glorious train;
Now may'st thou seek the blessed ones in vain,
For Earth and Air are now beneath the Rajah's reign.

3

Therefore the righteous Judge hath walk'd the Earth
In sorrow and in solitude to-night.
The sound of human mirth
To him is no delight;
He turns away from that ungrateful sight,
Hallowed not now by visitants divine,
And there he bends his melancholy way
Where, in yon full-orb'd Moon's refulgent light,
The Golden Towers of his old City shine
Above the silver sea. The ancient Chief
There bent his way in grief,
As if sad thoughts indulged would work their own relief.

4

There he beholds upon the sand
A lovely Maiden in the moonlight stand.
The land-breeze lifts her locks of jet,
The waves around her polish'd ankles play,
Her bosom with the salt sea-spray is wet;
Her arms are cross'd, unconsciously, to fold
That bosom from the cold,
While statue-like she seems her watch to keep,
Gazing intently on the restless deep.

5

Seven miserable days had Kailyal there,
From earliest dawn till evening watch'd the deep;
Six nights within the chamber of the rock,
Had laid her down, and found in prayer
That comfort which she sought in vain from sleep.
But when the seventh night came,
Never should she behold her father more,
The wretched Maiden said in her despair;
Yet would not quit the shore,
Nor turn her eyes one moment from the sea;
Never before
Had Kailyal watch'd it so impatiently,
Never so eagerly had hoped before,
As now when she believed, and said all hope was o'er.

6

Beholding her, how beautiful she stood,
In that wild solitude,
Baly from his invisibility
Had issued then, to know her cause of woe;

But that in the air beside her, he espied
Two Powers of Evil for her hurt allied,
Foul Arvalan and dreadful Lorrinite.
Walking in darkness him they could not see
And marking with what demon-like delight
They kept their innocent prey in sight,
He waits, expecting what the end may be.

7

She starts; for lo! where floating many a rood,
A Monster, hugest of the Ocean brood,
Weltering and lifeless, drifts toward the shore.
Backward she starts in fear before the flood,
And, when the waves retreat,
They leave their hideous burthen at her feet.

8

She ventures to approach with timid tread,
She starts, and half draws back in fear,
Then stops, and stretches out her head,
To see if that huge Beast indeed be dead.
Now growing bold, the Maid advances near,
Even to the margin of the ocean-flood.
Rightly she reads her Father's victory,
And lifts her joyous hands exultingly
To Heaven in gratitude.
Then spreading them toward the Sea,
While pious tears bedim her streaming eyes,
Come! come! my Father, come to me,
Ereenia, come! she cries,
Lo! from the opening deep they rise,
And to Ladurlad's arms the happy Kailyal flies.

9

She turn'd from him, to meet with beating heart,
The Glendoveer's embrace.
Now turn to me, for mine thou art!
Foul Arvalan exclaim'd; his loathsome face
Came forth, and from the air,
In fleshly form, he burst.
Always in horror and despair
Had Kailyal seen that form and face accurst,
But yet so sharp a pang had ne'er
Shot with a thrill like death through all her frame,
As now when on her hour of joy the Spectre came.

10

Vain is resistance now,
The fiendish laugh of Lorrinite is heard;
And at her dreadful word,
The Asuras once again appear,
And seize Ladurlad and the Glendoveer.

11

Hold your accursed hands!
A voice exclaim'd, whose dread commands [Padalon;
Were fear'd through all the vaults of
And there among them, in the midnight air,
The presence of the mighty Baly shone.
He, making manifest his mightiness,
Put forth on every side an hundred arms,
And seized the Sorceress; maugre all her charms,
Her and her fiendish ministers he caught
With force as uncontroulable as fate;
And that unhappy Soul, to whom
The Almighty Rajah's power availeth not
Living to avert, nor dead to mitigate
His righteous doom.

12

Help, help, Kehama! Father, help! he cried,
But Baly tarried not to abide
That mightier Power; with irresistible feet
He stampt and cleft the Earth; it open'd wide,
And gave him way to his own Judgement-seat.
Down, like a plummet, to the World below
He sunk, and bore his prey
To punishment deserved, and endless woe.

XVIII. KEHAMA'S DESCENT

1

The Earth, by Baly's feet divided,
Closed o'er his way as to the Judgement-seat
He plunged and bore his prey.
Scarce had the shock subsided,
When, darting from the Swerga's heavenly heights,
Kehama, like a thunderbolt, alights.
In wrath he came, a bickering flame
Flash'd from his eyes which made the moonlight dim,
And passion forcing way from every limb,
Like furnace-smoke, with terrors wrapt him round.
Furious he smote the ground;
Earth trembled underneath the dreadful stroke,
Again in sunder riven;
He hurl'd in rage his whirling weapon down.
But lo! the fiery sheckra to his feet
Return'd, as if by equal force redriven,
And from the abyss the voice of Baly came:
Not yet, O Rajah, hast thou won
The realms of Padalon!
Earth and the Swerga are thine own,
But, till Kehama shall subdue the throne
Of Hell, in torments Yamen holds his son.

2

Fool that he is! . . in torments let him lie!
Kehama, wrathful at his son, replied.
But what am I,
That thou should'st brave me? . . kindling in his pride
The dreadful Rajah cried.
Ho! Yamen! hear me. God of Padalon,
Prepare thy throne,
And let the Amreeta cup
Be ready for my lips, when I anon
Triumphantly shall take my seat thereon,
And plant upon thy neck my royal feet.

3

In voice like thunder thus the Rajah cried,
Impending o'er the abyss, with menacing hand
Put forth, as in the action of command,
And eyes that darted their red anger down.
Then drawing back he let the earth subside,
And, as his wrath relax'd, survey'd,
Thoughtfully and silently, the mortal Maid.
Her eye the while was on the farthest sky,
Where up the ethereal height
Ereenia rose and pass'd away from sight.

Never had she so joyfully
Beheld the coming of the Glendoveer,
Dear as he was and he deserved to be,
As now she saw him rise and disappear.
Come now what will, within her heart said she,
For thou art safe, and what have I to fear ?

4

Meantime the Almighty Rajah, late
In power and majesty and wrath array'd,
Had laid his terrors by
And gazed upon the Maid.
Pride could not quit his eye,
Nor that remorseless nature from his front
Depart; yet whoso had beheld him then
Had felt some admiration mix'd with dread,
And might have said,
That sure he seem'd to be the King of Men !
Less than the greatest that he could not be,
Who carried in his port such might and majesty.

5

In fear no longer for the Glendoveer,
Now towards the Rajah Kailyal turn'd her eyes
As if to ask what doom awaited her.
But then surprise,
Even as with fascination held them there,
So strange a thing it seem'd to see the change
Of purport in that all-commanding brow,
Which thoughtfully was bent upon her now.
Wondering she gazed, the while her Father's eye
Was fix'd upon Kehama haughtily ;
It spake defiance to him, high disdain,
Stern patience unsubduable by pain,
And pride triumphant over agony.

6

Ladurlad, said the Rajah, thou and I
Alike have done the work of Destiny,
Unknowing each to what the impulse tended ;
But now that over Earth and Heaven my reign
Is stablish'd, and the ways of Fate are plain
Before me, here our enmity is ended.
I take away thy Curse . . As thus he said,
The fire which in Ladurlad's heart and brain
Was burning, fled, and left him free from pain.
So rapidly his torments were departed,
That at the sudden ease he started,
As with a shock, and to his head
His hands up-fled,
As if he felt through every failing limb
The power and sense of life forsaking him.

7

Then turning to the Maid, the Rajah cried,
O Virgin, above all of mortal birth
Favour'd alike in beauty and in worth,
And in the glories of thy destiny,
Now let thy happy heart exult with pride,
For Fate hath chosen thee
To be Kehama's bride,
To be the Queen of Heaven and Earth,
And of whatever Worlds beside
Infinity may hide . . For I can see
The writing which, at thy nativity,
All-knowing Nature wrought upon thy brain,

In branching veins, which to the gifted eye
Map out the mazes of futurity.
There is it written, Maid, that thou and I,
Alone of human kind a deathless pair,
Are doom'd to share
The Amreeta-drink divine
Of immortality. Come, Maiden mine!
High-fated One, ascend the subject sky,
And by Kehama's side
Sit on the Swerga throne, his equal bride.

8

Oh never, . . never, . . Father!
Kailyal cried;
It is not as he saith, . . it cannot be!
I! . . I, his bride!
Nature is never false; he wrongeth her!
My heart belies such lines of destiny.
There is no other true interpreter!

9

At that reply, Kehama's darkening brow
Bewray'd the anger which he yet suppress'd;
Counsel thy daughter! tell her thou art now
Free from thy Curse, he said, and bid her bow
In thankfulness to Fate's benign behest.
Bid her her stubborn will restrain,
For Destiny at last must be obey'd,
And tell her, while obedience is delay'd,
Thy Curse will burn again.

10

She needeth not my counsel, he replied,
And idly, Rajah, dost thou reason thus
Of destiny! for though all other things
Were subject to the starry influencings,
And bow'd submissive to thy tyranny,
The virtuous heart and resolute mind are free.
Thus in their wisdom did the Gods decree
When they created man. Let come what will,
This is our rock of strength; in every ill,
Sorrow, oppression, pain and agony,
The spirit of the good is unsubdued,
And, suffer as they may, they triumph still.

11

Obstinate fools! exclaim'd the Mighty One,
Fate and my pleasure must be done,
And ye resist in vain!
Take your fit guerdon till we meet again!
So saying, his vindictive hand he flung
Towards them, fill'd with curses; then on high
Aloft he sprung, and vanish'd through the Sky.

XIX. MOUNT CALASAY

1

The Rajah, scattering curses as he rose,
Soar'd to the Swerga, and resumed his throne.
Not for his own redoubled agony,
Which now through heart and brain
With renovated pain,
Rush'd to its seat, Ladurlad breathes that groan,
That groan is for his child; he groan'd to see
That she was stricken now with leprosy,
Which as the enemy vindictive fled,
O'er all her frame with quick contagion spread.

She, wondering at events so passing strange,
And fill'd with hope and fear,
And joy to see the Tyrant disappear,
And glad expectance of her Glendoveer,
Perceived not in herself the hideous change.
His burning pain, she thought, had forced the groan
Her father breathed; his agonies alone
Were present to her mind; she clasp'd his knees,
Wept for his Curse, and did not feel her own.

2

Nor when she saw her plague, did her good heart,
True to itself, even for a moment fail.
Ha, Rajah! with disdainful smile she cries,
Mighty and wise and wicked as thou art,
Still thy blind vengeance acts a friendly part.
Shall I not thank thee for this scurf and scale
Of dire deformity, whose loathsome-
Surer than panoply of strongest mail,
Arms me against all foes? Oh, better so,
Better such foul disgrace,
Than that this innocent face
Should tempt thy wooing! That I need not dread;
Nor ever impious foe
Will offer outrage now, nor farther woe
Will beauty draw on my unhappy head,
Safe through the unholy world may Kailyal go.

3

Her face in virtuous pride
Was lifted to the skies,
As him and his poor vengeance she defied;
But earthward, when she ceased, she turn'd her eyes,
As if she thought to hide
The tear which in her own despite would rise.
Did then the thought of her own Glendoveer
Call forth that natural tear?
Was it a woman's fear,
A thought of earthly love which troubled her?
Like yon thin cloud amid the moonlight sky
That flits before the wind
And leaves no trace behind,
The womanly pang pass'd over Kailyal's mind.
This is a loathsome sight to human eye.
Half-shrinking at herself the Maiden thought;
Will it be so to him? Oh surely not!
The immortal Powers, who see
Through the poor wrappings of mortality,
Behold the soul, the beautiful soul,
Exempt from age and wasting maladies,
And undeform'd, while pure and free from sin.
This is a loathsome sight to human eyes,
But not to eyes divine,
Ereenia, Son of Heaven, oh not to thine!

4

The wrongful thought of fear, the womanly pain
Had pass'd away, her heart was calm again.
She raised her head, expecting now to see
The Glendoveer appear;
Where hath he fled, quoth she,
That he should tarry now? Oh! had she known
Whither the adventurous son of Heaven was flown,

Strong as her spirit was, it had not borne
The appalling thought, nor dared to hope for his return.

5

For he in search of Seeva's throne was gone,
To tell his tale of wrong;
In search of Seeva's own abode
The Glendoveer began his heavenly road. [skies
O wild emprize! above the farthest
He hoped to rise!
Him who is throned beyond the reach of thought,
The Alone, the Inaccessible, he sought.
O wild emprize! for when in days of yore,
For proud pre-eminence of power,
Brama and Veeshnoo, wild with rage contended,
And Seeva, in his might,
Their dread contention ended;
Before their sight
In form a fiery column did he tower,
Whose head above the highest height extended,
Whose base below the deepest depth descended.
Downward, its depth to sound
Veeshnoo a thousand years explored
The fathomless profound,
And yet no base he found:
Upward, to reach its head,
Ten myriad years the aspiring Brama soar'd,
And still, as up he fled,
Above him still the Immeasurable spread.
The rivals own'd their Lord,
And trembled and adored.
How shall the Glendoveer attain
What Brama and what Veeshnoo sought in vain?

6

Ne'er did such thought of lofty daring enter
Celestial Spirit's mind. O wild adventure
That throne to find, for he must leave behind
This World, that in the centre,
Within its salt-sea girdle, lies confined;
Yea the Seven Earths that, each with its own ocean,
Ring clasping ring, compose the mighty round.
What power of motion,
In less than endless years shall bear him there,
Along the limitless extent,
To the utmost bound of the remotest spheres?
What strength of wing
Suffice to pierce the Golden Firmament
That closes all within?
Yet he hath pass'd the measureless extent
And pierced the Golden Firmament;
For Faith hath given him power, and Space and Time
Vanish before that energy sublime.
Nor doth eternal Night
And outer Darkness check his resolute flight;
By strong desire through all he makes his way,
Till Seeva's Seat appears, . . behold
Mount Calasay!

7

Behold the Silver Mountain! round about
Seven ladders stand, so high, the aching eye,
Seeking their tops in vain amid the sky,
Might deem they led from earth to highest Heaven.

Ages would pass away,
And worlds with age decay,
Ere one whose patient feet from ring to ring
Must win their upward way,
Could reach the summit of Mount Calasay.
But that strong power that nerved his wing,
That all-surmounting will,
Intensity of faith and holiest love,
Sustain'd Ereenia still,
And he hath gain'd the plain, the sanctuary above.

8

Lo, there the Silver Bell,
That, self-sustain'd, hangs buoyant in the air!
Lo! the broad Table there, too bright For mortal sight,
From whose four sides the bordering gems unite
Their harmonising rays,
In one mid fount of many-colour'd light.
The stream of splendour, flashing as it flows,
Plays round, and feeds the stem of yon celestial Rose! [declare
Where is the Sage whose wisdom can
The hidden things of that mysterious flower, [to bear?
That flower which serves all mysteries
The sacred Triangle is there,
Holding the Emblem which no tongue may tell;
Is this the Heaven of Heavens, where Seeva's self doth dwell?

9

Here first the Glendoveer
Felt his wing flag, and paused upon his flight. [here
Was it that fear came over him, when
He saw the imagined throne appear?
Not so, for his immortal sight
Endured the Table's light;
Distinctly he beheld all things around,
And doubt and wonder rose within his mind
That this was all he found.
Howbeit he lifted up his voice and spake.
There is oppression in the World below;
Earth groans beneath the yoke; yea, in her woe,
She asks if the Avenger's eye is blind?
Awake, O Lord, awake!
Too long thy vengeance sleepeth. Holiest One! [sake,
Put thou thy terrors on for mercy's
And strike the blow, in justice to mankind!

10

So as he pray'd, intenser faith he felt,
His spirit seem'd to melt
With ardent yearnings of increasing love;
Upward he turn'd his eyes
As if there should be something yet above; [cries;
Let me not, Seeva, seek in vain! he
Thou art not here, . . for how should these contain thee?
Thou art not here, . . for how should I sustain thee?
But thou, where'er thou art,
Canst hear the voice of prayer,
Canst read the righteous heart.
Thy dwelling who can tell,
Or who, O Lord, hath seen thy secret throne?
But thou art not alone,
Not unapproachable!
O all-containing Mind,
Thou who art every where,
Whom all who seek shall find,
Hear me, O Seeva! hear the suppliant's prayer!

11

So saying, up he sprung,
And struck the Bell, which self-suspended hung
Before the mystic Rose.
From side to side the silver tongue
Melodious swung, and far and wide
Soul-thrilling tones of heavenly music rung.
Abash'd, confounded,
It left the Glendoveer; . . yea all astounded
In overpowering fear and deep dismay;
For when that Bell had sounded,
The Rose, with all the mysteries it surrounded,
The Bell, the Table, and Mount Calasay,
The holy Hill itself, with all thereon,
Even as a morning dream before the day
Dissolves away, they faded and were gone.

12

Where shall he rest his wing, where turn for flight,
For all around is Light,
Primal, essential, all-pervading Light!
Heart cannot think, nor tongue declare,
Nor eyes of Angel bear
That Glory unimaginably bright;
The Sun himself had seem'd
A speck of darkness there,
Amid that Light of Light!

13

Down fell the Glendoveer,
Down through all regions, to our mundane sphere
He fell; but in his ear [heard,
A Voice, which from within him came, was
The indubitable word
Of Him to whom all secret things are known: [throne.
Go, ye who suffer, go to Yamen's
He hath the remedy for every woe;
He setteth right whate'er is wrong below.

XX. THE EMBARKATION

1

Down from the Heaven of Heavens Ereenia fell
Precipitate, yet imperceptible
His fall, nor had he cause nor thought of fear;
And when he came within this mundane sphere,
And felt that Earth was near,
The Glendoveer his azure wings expanded,
And, sloping down the sky
Toward the spot from whence he sprung on high,
There on the shore he landed.

2

Kailyal advanced to meet him,
Not moving now as she was wont to greet him,
Joy in her eye and in her eager pace;
With a calm smile of melancholy pride
She met him now, and turning half aside
Her warning hand repell'd the dear embrace.

3

Strange things, Ereenia, have befallen us here,
The Virgin said; the Almighty Man hath read
The lines which, traced by Nature on my brain,
There to the gifted eye
Make all my fortunes plain,
Mapping the mazes of futurity.
He sued for peace, for it is written there
That I with him the Amreeta cup must share;
Wherefore he bade me come, and by his side
Sit on the Swerga throne, his equal bride.

I need not tell thee what reply was given;
My heart, the sure interpreter of Heaven,
His impious words belied.
Thou seest his poor revenge! So having said,
One look she glanced upon her leprous stain
Indignantly, and shook
Her head in calm disdain.

4

O Maid of soul divine!
O more than ever dear,
And more than ever mine,
Replied the Glendoveer;
He hath not read, be sure, the mystic ways
Of Fate; almighty as he is, that maze
Hath mock'd his fallible sight.
Said he the Amreeta-cup? So far aright
The Evil One may see; for Fate displays
Her hidden things in part, and part conceals,
Baffling the wicked eye
Alike with what she hides, and what reveals,
When with unholy purpose it would pry
Into the secrets of futurity.
So may it be permitted him to see
Dimly the inscrutable decree;
For to the World below,
Where Yamen guards the Amreeta, we must go;
Thus Seeva hath express'd his will, even he [he saith,
The Holiest hath ordain'd it; there,
All wrongs shall be redrest
By Yamen, by the righteous Power of Death.

5

Forthwith the Father and the fated Maid,
And that heroic Spirit, who for them
Such flight had late essay'd,
The will of Heaven obey'd.
They went their way along the road
That leads to Yamen's dread abode.

6

Many a day hath pass'd away
Since they began their arduous way,
Their way of toil and pain;
And now their weary feet attain
The Earth's remotest bound,
Where outer Ocean girds it round.
But not like other Oceans this;
Rather it seem'd a drear abyss,
Upon whose brink they stood.
Oh! scene of fear! the travellers hear
The raging of the flood;
They hear how fearfully it roars,
But clouds of darker shade than night
For ever hovering round those shores,
Hide all things from their sight;
The Sun upon that darkness pours
His unavailing light,
Nor ever Moon nor Stars display,
Through the thick shade, one guiding ray
To show the perils of the way.

7

There in a creek a vessel lay,
Just on the confines of the day,
It rode at anchor in its bay,
These venturous pilgrims to convey
Across that outer Sea.
Strange vessel sure it seem'd to be,
And all unfit for such wild sea!
For through its yawning side the wave
Was oozing in; the mast was frail,
And old and torn its only sail.
How may that crazy vessel brave
The billows that in wild commotion
For ever roar and rave?
How hope to cross the dreadful Ocean
O'er which eternal shadows dwell,
Whose secrets none return to tell!

8

Well might the travellers fear to enter!
But summon'd once on that adventure,
For them was no retreat.
Nor boots it with reluctant feet
To linger on the strand;
Aboard! aboard!
An aweful voice, that left no choice,
Sent forth its stern command,
Aboard! aboard!
The travellers hear that voice in fear,
And breathe to Heaven an inward prayer,
And take their seats in silence there.

9

Self-hoisted then, behold the sail
Expands itself before the gale;
Hands, which they cannot see, let slip
The cable of that fated ship;
The land breeze sends her on her way,
And lo! they leave the living light of day!

XXI. THE WORLD'S END

1

Swift as an arrow in its flight
The Ship shot through the incumbent night;
And they have left behind
The raging billows and the roaring wind,
The storm, the darkness, and all mortal fears;
And lo! another light
To guide their way appears,
The light of other spheres.

2

That instant from Ladurlad's heart and brain
The Curse was gone; he feels again
Fresh as in youth's fair morning, and the Maid
Hath lost her leprous stain.
The Tyrant then hath no dominion here,
Starting she cried; O happy, happy hour!
We are beyond his power!
Then raising to the Glendoveer,
With heavenly beauty bright, her angel face,
Turn'd not reluctant now, and met his dear embrace.

3

Swift glides the Ship with gentle motion
Across that calm and quiet ocean;
That glassy sea which seem'd to be
The mirror of tranquillity.
Their pleasant passage soon was o'er,
The Ship hath reach'd its destined shore;
A level belt of ice which bound,
As with an adamantine mound,
The waters of the sleeping Ocean round.
Strange forms were on the strand
Of earth-born spirits slain before their time;
Who wandering over sea and sky and land,
Had so fulfill'd their term; and now were met
Upon this icy belt, a motley band,
Waiting their summons at the appointed hour,
When each before the Judgement-seat must stand,
And hear his doom from Baly's righteous power.

4

Foul with habitual crimes, a hideous crew
Were there, the race of rapine and of blood.
Now having overpass'd the mortal flood,
Their own deformity they knew,
And knew the meed that to their deeds was due.

Therefore in fear and agony they stood,
Expecting when the Evil Messenger
Among them should appear. But with their fear
A hope was mingled now;
O'er the dark shade of guilt a deeper hue
It threw, and gave a fiercer character
To the wild eye and lip and sinful brow.
They hoped that soon Kehama would subdue
The inexorable God and seize his throne,
Reduce the infernal World to his command,
And with his irresistible right hand,
Redeem them from the vaults of Padalon.

5

Apart from these a milder company,
The victims of offences not their own,
Look'd when the appointed Messenger should come;
Gather'd together some, and some alone
Brooding in silence on their future doom.
Widows whom, to their husbands' funeral fire, [pyre,
Force or strong error led, to share the
As to their everlasting marriage-bed:
And babes, by sin unstain'd,
Whom erring parents vow'd
To Ganges, and the holy stream profaned [unordain'd
With that strange sacrifice, rite
By Law, by sacred Nature unallow'd:
Others more hapless in their destiny,
Scarce having first inhaled their vital breath,
Whose cradles from some tree
Unnatural hands suspended,
Then left, till gentle Death,
Coming like Sleep, their feeble moanings ended;
Or for his prey the ravenous Kite descended;
Or marching like an army from their caves,
The Pismires blacken'd o'er, then bleach'd and bare
Left their unharden'd bones to fall asunder there.

6

Innocent Souls! thus set so early free
From sin and sorrow and mortality,
Their spotless spirits all-creating Love
Received into its universal breast.
Yon blue serene above
Was their domain; clouds pillow'd them to rest;
The Elements on them like nurses tended,
And with their growth ethereal substance blended.
Less pure than these is that strange Indian bird, [bill,
Who never dips in earthly streams her
But, when the sound of coming showers is heard,
Looks up, and from the clouds receives her fill.
Less pure the footless fowl of Heaven, that never [ever
Rest upon earth, but on the wing for
Hovering o'er flowers, their fragrant food inhale,
Drink the descending dew upon its way,
And sleep aloft while floating on the gale.

7

And thus these innocents in yonder sky
Grow and are strengthen'd, while the allotted years
Perform their course; then hitherward they fly,
Being free from moral taint, so free from fears,
A joyous band, expecting soon to soar
To Indra's happy spheres,
And mingle with the blessed company
Of heavenly spirits there for ever more.

8

A Gulph profound surrounded
This icy belt; the opposite side
With highest rocks was bounded;
But where their heads they hide,
Or where their base is founded,
None could espy. Above all reach of sight
They rose, the second Earth was on their height,
Their feet were fix'd in everlasting night.

9

So deep the Gulph, no eye
Could plum its dark profundity,
Yet all its depth must try; for this the road
To Padalon, and Yamen's dread abode.
And from below continually
Ministrant Demons rose and caught
The Souls whose hour was come;
Then with their burthen fraught,
Plunged down, and bore them to receive their doom.

10

Then might be seen who went in hope, and who
Trembled to meet the meed
Of many a foul misdeed, as wild they threw
Their arms retorted from the Demons' grasp,
And look'd around, all eagerly, to seek
For help, where help was none; and strove for aid
To clasp the nearest shade;
Yea, with imploring looks and horrent shriek, bending,
Even from one Demon to another
With hands extending,
Their mercy they essay'd.
Still from the verge they strain,
And from the dreadful gulph avert their eyes,
In vain; down plunge the Demons, and their cries
Feebly, as down they sink, from that profound arise.

11

What heart of living man could, undisturb'd, there
Bear sight so sad as this! What wonder
If Kailyal's lip were blanch'd with inmost dread!
The chill which from that icy belt
Struck through her, was less keen than what she felt
With her heart's blood through every limb dispread.
Close to the Glendoveer she clung,
And clasping round his neck her trembling hands,
She closed her eyes, and there in silence hung.

12

Then to Ladurlad said the Glendoveer,
These Demons, whom thou seest, the ministers
Of Yamen, wonder to behold us here;
But for the dead they come, and not for us: thus,
Therefore albeit they gaze upon thee
Have thou no fear.
A little while thou must be left alone,
Till I have borne thy daughter down,
And placed her safely by the throne
Of him who keeps the Gate of Padalon.

13

Then taking Kailyal in his arms, he said,
Be of good heart, Beloved! it is I
Who bear thee. Saying this, his wings he spread,
Sprung upward in the sky, and poised his flight,
Then plunged into the Gulph, and sought the World of Night.

XXII. THE GATE OF PADALON

1

THE strong foundations of this inmost Earth
Rest upon Padalon. That icy Mound
Which girt the mortal Ocean round,
Reach'd the profound, . .
Ice in the regions of the upper air,
Crystal midway, and adamant below,
Whose strength sufficed to bear
The weight of all this upper World of ours, [of Woe.
And with its rampart closed the Realm
Eight gates hath Padalon; eight heavenly Powers
Have them in charge, each alway at his post,
Lest from their penal caves the accursed host,
Maugre the might of Baly and the God,
Should break, and carry ruin all abroad.

2

Those gates stand ever open, night and day,
And Souls of mortal men
For ever throng the way.
Some from the dolorous den,
Children of sin and wrath, return no more:
They, fit companions of the Spirits accurst,
Are doom'd, like them in baths of fire immerst,
Or weltering upon beds of molten ore,
Or stretch'd upon the brazen floor,
Are fasten'd down with adamantine chains;
While, on their substance inconsumable,
Leeches of fire for ever hang and pull,
And worms of fire for ever gnaw their food,
That, still renew'd,
Freshens for ever their perpetual pains.

3

Others there were whom Baly's voice condemn'd,
By long and painful penance, to atone
Their fleshly deeds. Them, from the Judgement-throne,
Dread Azyoruca, where she sat involved
In darkness as a tent, received, and dealt
To each the measure of his punishment;
Till, in the central springs of fire, the Will
Impure is purged away; and the freed soul,
Thus fitted to receive a second birth,
Embodied once again, revisits Earth.

4

But they whom Baly's righteous voice absolved,
And Yamen, viewing with benignant eye,
Dismiss'd to seek their heritage on high,
How joyfully they leave this gloomy bourne,
The dread sojourn
Of Guilt and twin-born Punishment and Woe,
And wild Remorse, here link'd with worse Despair!
They to the eastern Gate rejoicing go:
The Ship of Heaven awaits their coming there, [light
And on they sail, greeting the blessed
Through realms of upper air,
Bound for the Swerga once; but now no more
Their voyage rests upon that happy shore, [might
Since Indra, by the dreadful Rajah's
Compell'd, hath taken flight;
On to the second World their way they wend,
And there, in trembling hope, await the doubtful end.

5

For still in them doth hope predominate,
Faith's precious privilege, when higher Powers [hours.
Give way to fear in these portentous
Behold the Wardens eight,
Each silent at his gate
Expectant stands; they turn their anxious eyes
Within, and, listening to the dizzy din
Of mutinous uproar, each in all his hands [fight.
Holds all his weapons, ready for the
For, hark! what clamorous cries
Upon Kehama, for deliverance, call!
Come, Rajah! they exclaim, too long we groan
In torments. Come, Deliverer! yonder throne
Awaits thee. . . Now, Kehama! Rajah, now!
Earthly Almighty, wherefore tarriest thou? . .
Such were the sounds that rung, in wild uproar,
O'er all the echoing vaults of Padalon;
And as the Asuras from the Brazen floor, [to rise,
Struggling against their fetters, strove
Their clashing chains were heard, and shrieks and cries,
With curses mix'd, against the Fiends who urge,
Fierce on their rebel limbs, the avenging scourge.

6

These were the sounds which, at the southern gate,
Assail'd Ereenia's ear; alighting here
He laid before Neroodi's feet the Maid,
Who, pale and cold with fear,
Hung on his neck, well-nigh a lifeless weight.

7

Who and what art thou? cried the Guardian Power,
Sight so unwonted wondering to behold, . .
O Son of Light!
Who comest here at this portentous hour,
When Yamen's throne
Trembles, and all our might can scarce keep down
The rebel race from seizing Padalon, . .
Who and what art thou? and what wild despair,
Or wilder hope, from realms of upper air,
Tempts thee to bear
This mortal Maid to our forlorn abodes?
Fitter for her, I ween, the Swerga bowers,
And sweet society of heavenly Powers,
Than this, . . a doleful scene,
Even in securest hours.
And whither would ye go?
Alas! can human or celestial ear,
Unmadden'd, hear
The shrieks and yellings of infernal woe?
Can living flesh and blood
Endure the passage of the fiery flood!

8

Lord of the Gate, replied the Glendoveer,
We come obedient to the will of Fate;
And haply doom'd to bring
Hope and salvation to the Infernal King,
For Seeva sends us here,
Even He to whom futurity is known,
The Holiest, bade us go to Yamen's throne.
Thou seest my precious charge;
Under thy care, secure from harm, I leave her,
While I ascend to bear her father down.
Beneath the shelter of thine arm receive her!

9

Then quoth he to the Maid,
Be of good cheer, my Kailyal! dearest dear,
In faith subdue thy dread;
Anon I shall be here. So having said,
Aloft with vigorous bound the Glendoveer
Sprung in celestial might,
And soaring up, in spiral circles, wound
His indefatigable flight.

10

But as he thus departed,
The Maid, who at Neroodi's feet was lying,
Like one entranced or dying,
Recovering strength from sudden terror, started; [sight,
And gazing after him with straining
And straining arms, she stood,
As if in attitude
To win him back from flight.
Yea, she had shaped his name
For utterance, to recall and bid him stay, [shame
Nor leave her thus alone; but virtuous
Represt the unbidden sounds upon their way;
And calling faith to aid,
Even in this fearful hour, the pious Maid
Collected courage, till she seem'd to be
Calm and in hope, such power hath piety.
Before the Giant Keeper of the Gate
She crost her patient arms, and at his feet,
Prepar'd to meet
The aweful will of Fate with equal mind,
She took her seat resign'd.

11

Even the stern trouble of Neroodi's brow
Relax'd as he beheld the valiant Maid.
Hope, long unfelt till now,
Rose in his heart reviving, and a smile
Dawn'd in his brightening countenance, the while
He gazed on her with wonder and delight.
The blessing of the Powers of Padalon,
Virgin, be on thee! said the admiring God; [birth,
And blessed be the hour that gave thee Daughter of Earth!
For thou to this forlorn abode hast brought
Hope, who too long hath been a stranger here.
And surely for no lamentable lot
Nature, that erreth not,
To thee that heart of fortitude hath given,
Those eyes of purity, that face of love; . .
If thou beëst not the inheritrix of Heaven,
There is no truth above.

12

Thus as Neroodi spake, his brow severe
Shone with an inward joy; for sure he thought
When Seeva sent so fair a creature here,
In this momentous hour,
Ere long the World's deliverance would be wrought,
And Padalon escape the Rajah's power.
With pious mind the Maid, in humble guise
Inclined, received his blessing silently,
And raised her grateful eyes
A moment, then again [high
Abased them at his presence. Hark! on
The sound of coming wings! . . her anxious ears
Have caught the distant sound. Ereenia brings
His burthen down! Upstarting from her seat,

How joyfully she rears
Her eager head! and scarce upon the ground [found,
Ladurlad's giddy feet their footing
When, with her trembling arms, she claspt him round.
No word of greeting,
Nor other sign of joy at that strange meeting;
Expectant of their fate,
Silent, and hand in hand,
Before the Infernal Gate,
The Father and his pious Daughter stand.

13

Then to Neroodi said the Glendoveer,
No Heaven-born Spirit e'er hath visited
This region drear and dread; but I, the first
Who tread your World accurst.
Lord of the Gate, to whom these realms are known,
Direct our fated way to Yamen's throne.

14

Bring forth my Chariot, Carmala! quoth then
The Keeper of the way.
It was the Car wherein
On Yamen's festal day,
When all the Powers of Hell attend their King,
Yearly to Yamenpur did he repair
To pay his homage there.
Poised on a single wheel, it moved along,
Instinct with motion; by what wondrous skill
Compact, no human tongue could tell,
Nor human wit devise; but on that wheel,
Moving or still,
As if with life indued,
The Car miraculous supported stood.

15

Then Carmala brought forth two mantles, white
As the swan's breast, and bright as mountain snow,
When from the wintry sky
The sun, late-rising, shines upon the height,
And rolling vapours fill the vale below.
Not without pain the unaccustom'd sight
That brightness could sustain;
For neither mortal stain,
Nor parts corruptible, remain,
Nor aught that time could touch, or force destroy,
In that pure web whereof the robes were wrought; [tried,
So long had it in tenfold fires been
And blanch'd, and to that brightness purified.
Apparell'd thus, alone,
Children of Earth, Neroodi cried,
In safety may ye pass to Yamen's throne. [blood
Thus only can your living flesh and
Endure the passage of the fiery flood.

16

Of other frame, O son of Heaven, art thou!
Yet hast thou now to go
Through regions which thy heavenly mould will try.
Glories unutterably bright, I know,
And beams intense of empyrean light,
Thine eye divine can bear: but fires of woe,
The sight of torments, and the cry
Of absolute despair,
Might not these things dismay thee on thy flight,
And thy strong pennons flag and fail thee there? [thou art,
Trust not thy wings, celestial though

Nor thy good heart, which horror might assail
And pity quail,
Pity in these abodes of no avail;
But take thy seat this mortal pair beside,
And Carmala the infernal Car will guide.
Go, and may happy end your way betide! [roll'd on,
So, as he spake, the self-moved Car
And lo! they pass the Gate of Padalon.

XXIII. PADALON

1

Whoe'er hath loved with venturous step to tread
The chambers dread
Of some deep cave, and seen his taper's beam
Lost in the arch of darkness overhead,
And mark'd its gleam,
Playing afar upon the sunless stream,
Where from their secret bed,
And course unknown and inaccessible,
The silent waters well;
Whoe'er hath trod such caves of endless night,
He knows, when measuring back the gloomy way,
With what delight refresh'd his eye
Perceives the shadow of the light of day, [it falls
Through the far portal slanting, where
Dimly reflected on the watery walls;
How heavenly seems the sky;
And how, with quicken'd feet, he hastens up,
Eager again to greet
The living World and blessed sunshine there,
And drink, as from a cup
Of joy, with thirsty lips, the open air.

2

Far other light than that of day there shone
Upon the travellers, entering Padalon.
They too in darkness enter'd on their way,
But, far before the Car,
A glow, as of a fiery furnace light,
Fill'd all before them. 'Twas a light which made
Darkness itself appear
A thing of comfort, and the sight, dismay'd,
Shrunk inward from the molten atmosphere.
Their way was through the adamantine rock [side
Which girt the World of Woe; on either
Its massive walls arose, and overhead
Arch'd the long passage; onward as they ride,
With stronger glare the light around them spread;
And lo! the regions dread,
The World of Woe before them, opening wide.

3

There rolls the fiery flood,
Girding the realms of Padalon around.
A sea of flame it seem'd to be,
Sea without bound;
For neither mortal nor immortal sight,
Could pierce across through that intensest light.
A single rib of steel,
Keen as the edge of keenest scymitar,
Spann'd this wide gulph of fire. The infernal Car
Roll'd to the Gulph, and on its single wheel
Self-balanced, rose upon that edge of steel. [head,
Red-quivering float the vapours over-
The fiery gulph beneath them spread.

Tosses its billowing blaze with rush and roar;
Steady and swift the self-moved Chariot went,
Winning the long ascent,
Then, downward rolling, gains the farther shore.

4

But, oh! what sounds and sights of woe,
What sights and sounds of fear,
Assail the mortal travellers here!
Their way was on a causey straight and wide,
Where penal vaults on either side were seen,
Ranged like the cells wherein
Those wondrous winged alchemists infold
Their stores of liquid gold.
Thick walls of adamant divide
The dungeons; and from yonder circling flood,
Off-streams of fire through secret channels glide,
And wind among them, and in each provide
An everlasting food
Of rightful torments for the accursed brood.

5

These were the rebel race, who in their might
Confiding impiously, would fain have driven
The Deities supreme from highest Heaven:
But by the Suras, in celestial fight,
Opposed and put to flight,
Here, in their penal dens, the accursed crew,
Not for its crime, but for its failure, rue
Their wild ambition. Yet again they long
The contest to renew,
And wield their arms again in happier hour;
And with united power,
Following Kehama's triumph, to press on
From World to World, and Heaven to Heaven, and Sphere
To Sphere, till Hemakoot shall be their own,
And Meru-Mount, and Indra's Swerga-Bowers,
And Brama's region, where the heavenly Hours [day.
Weave the vast circle of his age-long
Even over Veeshnoo's empyreal seat
They trust the Rajah shall extend their sway,
And that the seven-headed Snake, whereon
The strong Preserver sets his conquering feet,
Will rise and shake him headlong from his throne,
When, in their irresistible array,
Amid the Milky Sea they force their way.
Even higher yet their frantic thoughts aspire;
Yea, on their beds of torment as they lie,
The highest, holiest Seeva, they defy,
And tell him they shall have anon their day,
When they will storm his realm, and seize Mount Calasay.

6

Such impious hopes torment
Their raging hearts, impious and impotent;
And now, with unendurable desire
And lust of vengeance, that, like inward fire,
Doth aggravate their punishment, they rave

Upon Kehama; him the accursed rout
Acclaim; with furious cries and maddening shout
They call on him to save;
Kehama! they exclaim;
Thundering the dreadful echo rolls about,
And Hell's whole vault repeats Kehama's name.

7

Over these dens of punishment, the host
Of Padalon maintain eternal guard,
Keeping upon the walls their vigilant ward.
At every angle stood
A watch-tower, the decurion Demon's post,
Where raised on high he view'd with sleepless eye
His trust, that all was well. And over these,
Such was the perfect discipline of Hell,
Captains of fifties and of hundreds held
Authority, each in his loftier tower;
And chiefs of legions over them had power;
And thus all Hell with towers was girt around.
Aloft the brazen turrets shone
In the red light of Padalon;
And on the walls between,
Dark moving, the infernal Guards were seen,
Gigantic Demons, pacing to and fro;
Who ever and anon,
Spreading their crimson pennons, plunged below,
Faster to rivet down the Asuras' chains,
And with the snaky scourge and fiercer pains,
Repress their rage rebellious. Loud around,
In mingled sound, the echoing lash, the clash
Of chains, the ponderous hammer's iron stroke,
With execrations, groans, and shrieks and cries
Combined, in one wild dissonance, arise;
And through the din there broke,
Like thunder heard through all the warring winds,
The dreadful name. Kehama, still they rave,
Hasten and save!
Now, now, Deliverer! now, Kehama, now!
Earthly Almighty, wherefore tarriest thou?

8

Oh, if that name abhorr'd,
Thus utter'd, could well nigh
Dismay the Powers of Hell, and daunt their Lord,
How fearfully to Kailyal's ear it came!
She, as the Car roll'd on its rapid way,
Bent down her head, and closed her eyes for dread;
And deafening, with strong effort from within,
Her ears against the din,
Cover'd and press'd them close with both her hands.
Sure if the mortal Maiden had not fed
On heavenly food, and long been strengthened
With heavenly converse for such end vouchsafed,
Her human heart had fail'd, and she had died
Beneath the horrors of this aweful hour.
But Heaven supplied a power
Beyond her earthly nature, to the measure
Of need infusing strength;
And Fate, whose secret and unerring pleasure

Appointed all, decreed
An ample meed and recompense at length.
High-fated Maid, the righteous hour is nigh!
The all-embracing Eye
Of Retribution still beholdeth thee;
Bear onward to the end, O Maid, courageously!

9

On roll'd the Car, and lo! afar
Upon its height the towers of Yamenpur
Rise on the astonish'd sight.
Behold the infernal City, Yamen's seat
Of empire, in the midst of Padalon,
Where the eight causeys meet.
There on a rock of adamant it stood,
Resplendent far and wide,
Itself of solid diamond edified,
And all around it roll'd the fiery flood.
Eight bridges arch'd the stream; huge piles of brass
Magnificent, such structures as beseem
The Seat and Capital of such great God,
Worthy of Yamen's own august abode.
A brazen tower and gateway at each end
Of each was raised, where Giant Wardens stood,
Station'd in arms the passage to defend,
That never foe might cross the fiery flood.

10

Oh what a gorgeous sight it was to see
The Diamond City blazing on its height
With more than mid-sun splendour, by the light
Of its own fiery river!
Its towers and domes and pinnacles and spires,
Turrets and battlements, that flash and quiver
Through the red restless atmosphere for ever;
And hovering over head,
The smoke and vapours of all Padalon,
Fit firmament for such a world, were spread,
With surge and swell, and everlasting motion, [ocean.
Heaving and opening like tumultuous

11

Nor were there wanting there
Such glories as beseem'd such region well;
For though with our blue heaven and genial air
The firmament of Hell might not compare,
As little might our earthly tempests vie
With the dread storms of that infernal sky,
Whose clouds of all metallic elements
Sublimed were full. For, when its thunder broke,
Not all the united World's artillery,
In one discharge, could equal that loud stroke;
And though the Diamond Towers and Battlements
Stood firm upon their adamantine rock,
Yet while it vollied round the vault of Hell, [shock,
Earth's solid arch was shaken with the
And Cities in one mighty ruin fell.
Through the red sky terrific meteors scour;
Huge stones come hailing down; or sulphur-shower,
Floating amid the lurid air like snow,
Kindles in its descent,
And with blue fire-drops rains on all below.
At times the whole supernal element
Igniting, burst in one large sheet of flame,
And roar'd as with the sound
Of rushing winds, above, below, around;

Anon the flame was spent, and overhead
A heavy cloud of moving darkness spread.

12

Straight to the brazen bridge and gate
The self-moved Chariot bears its mortal load.
At sight of Carmala,
On either side the Giant guards divide,
And give the chariot way.
Up yonder winding road it rolls along,
Swift as the bittern soars on spiral wing,
And lo! the Palace of the Infernal King!

13

Two forms inseparable in unity
Hath Yamen; even as with hope or fear
The Soul regardeth him doth he appear;
For hope and fear
At that dread hour, from ominous conscience spring,
And err not in their bodings. Therefore some,
They who polluted with offences come,
Behold him as the King
Of Terrors, black of aspect, red of eye,
Reflecting back upon the sinful mind,
Heighten'd with vengeance, and with wrath divine
Its own inborn deformity.
But to the righteous Spirit how benign
His aweful countenance,
Where, tempering justice with parental love,
Goodness and heavenly grace
And sweetest mercy shine! Yet is he still
Himself the same, one form, one face, one will; [one;
And these his twofold aspects are but
And change is none
In him, for change in Yamen could not be,
The Immutable is he.

14

He sat upon a marble sepulchre
Massive and huge, where at the Monarch's feet,
The righteous Baly had his Judgement-seat. [stood;
A Golden Throne before them vacant
Three human forms sustain'd its ponderous weight,
With lifted hands outspread, and shoulders bow'd
Bending beneath the load.
A fourth was wanting. They were of the hue
Of coals of fire; yet were they flesh and blood,
And living breath they drew;
And their red eye-balls roll'd with ghastly stare,
As thus, for their misdeeds, they stood tormented there.

15

On steps of gold those living Statues stood,
Who bore the Golden Throne. A cloud behind [light
Immovable was spread; not all the
Of all the flames and fires of Padalon
Could pierce its depth of night.
There Azyoruca veil'd her aweful form
In those eternal shadows: there she sate,
And as the trembling Souls, who crowd around
The Judgement-seat, received the doom of fate,
Her giant arms, extending from the cloud,
Drew them within the darkness. Moving out [rout,
To grasp and bear away the innumerous
For ever and for ever thus were seen
The thousand mighty arms of that dread Queen.

16

Here, issuing from the car, the Glendoveer
Did homage to the God, then raised his head.
Suppliants we come, he said,
I need not tell thee by what wrongs oppress,
For nought can pass on earth to thee unknown;
Sufferers from tyranny we seek for rest,
And Seeva bade us go to Yamen's throne;
Here, he hath said, all wrongs shall be redrest.
Yamen replied, Even now the hour draws near,
When Fate its hidden ways will manifest.
Not for light purpose would the Wisest send
His suppliants here, when we, in doubt and fear,
The aweful issue of the hour attend.
Wait ye in patience and in faith the end!

XXIV. THE AMREETA

1

So spake the King of Padalon, when, lo! [Hell,
The voice of lamentation ceased in
And sudden silence all around them fell,
Silence more wild and terrible
Than all the infernal dissonance before.
Through that portentous stillness, far away,
Unwonted sounds were heard, advancing on
And deepening on their way;
For now the inexorable hour
Was come, and, in the fulness of his power,
Now that the dreadful rites had all been done,
Kehama from the Swerga hasten'd down,
To seize upon the throne of Padalon.

2

He came in all his might and majesty,
With all his terrors clad, and all his pride;
And, by the attribute of Deity,
Which he had won from Heaven, self-multiplied,
The Almighty Man appear'd on every side.
In the same indivisible point of time,
At the eight Gates he stood at once, and beat
The Warden-Gods of Hell beneath his feet;
Then, in his brazen Cars of triumph, straight,
At the same moment, drove through every gate.
By Aullays, hugest of created kind,
Fiercest, and fleeter than the viewless wind,
His Cars were drawn, ten yokes of ten abreast, . .
What less sufficed for such almighty weight?
Eight bridges from the fiery flood arose
Growing before his way; and on he goes,
And drives the thundering Chariot wheels along,
At once o'er all the roads of Padalon.

3

Silent and motionless remain
The Asuras on their bed of pain,
Waiting, with breathless hope, the great event.
All Hell was hush'd in dread,
Such awe that omnipresent coming spread;

Nor had its voice been heard, though all its rout
Innumerable had lifted up one shout;
Nor if the infernal firmament
Had in one unimaginable burst
Spent its collected thunders, had the sound,
Been audible, such louder terrors went
Before his forms substantial. Round about [wide,
The presence scattered lightnings far and
That quench'd on every side,
With their intensest blaze, the feebler fire
Of Padalon, even as the stars go out,
When, with prodigious light,
Some blazing meteor fills the astonish'd night.

4

The Diamond City shakes!
The adamantine Rock
Is loosen'd with the shock!
From its foundation moved, it heaves and quakes; [dust;
The brazen portals crumbling fall to
Prone fall the Giant Guards
Beneath the Aullays crush'd;
On, on, through Yamenpur, their thundering feet
Speed from all points to Yamen's Judgement-seat.
And lo! where multiplied,
Behind, before him, and on every side,
Wielding all weapons in his countless hands,
Around the Lord of Hell Kehama stands!
Then too the Lord of Hell put forth his might:
Thick darkness, blacker than the blackest night,
Rose from their wrath, and veil'd
The unutterable fight.
The power of Fate and Sacrifice prevail'd,
And soon the strife was done.
Then did the Man-God re-assume
His unity, absorbing into one
The consubstantiate shapes; and as the gloom
Opened, fallen Yamen on the ground was seen,
His neck beneath the conquering Rajah's feet,
Who on the marble tomb
Had his triumphal seat.

5

Silent the Man-Almighty sate; a smile
Gleam'd on his dreadful lips, the while
Dallying with power, he paused from following up
His conquest, as a man in social hour
Sips of the grateful cup,
Again and yet again with curious taste
Searching its subtle flavour ere he drink:
Even so Kehama now forbore his haste;
Having within his reach whate'er he sought,
On his own haughty power he seem'd to muse,
Pampering his arrogant heart with silent thought.
Before him stood the Golden Throne in sight,
Right opposite; he could not choose but see
Nor seeing choose but wonder. Who are ye
Who bear the Golden Throne tormented there?
He cried; for whom doth Destiny prepare
The Imperial Seat, and why are ye but Three?

6

FIRST STATUE

I of the Children of Mankind was first,
Me miserable! who, adding store to store, [accurst,
Heapt up superfluous wealth; and now
For ever I the frantic crime deplore.

SECOND STATUE

I o'er my Brethren of Mankind the first
Usurping power, set up a throne sublime,
A King and Conqueror: therefore thus accurst,
For ever I in vain repent the crime.

THIRD STATUE

I on the Children of Mankind the first,
In God's most holy name, imposed a tale
Of impious falsehood; therefore thus accurst,
For ever I in vain the crime bewail.

7

Even as thou here beholdest us,
Here we have stood, tormented thus,
Such countless ages, that they seem to be
Long as eternity,
And still we are but Three.
A Fourth will come to share
Our pain, at yonder vacant corner bear
His portion of the burthen, and compleat
The Golden Throne for Yamen's Judgement-seat. [be
Thus hath it been appointed: he must
Equal in guilt to us, the guilty Three.
Kehama, come! too long we wait for thee!

8

Thereat, with one accord,
The Three took up the word, like choral song,
Come Rajah! Man-God! Earth's Almighty Lord!
Kehama, come! we wait for thee too long.

9

A short and sudden laugh of wondering pride [reply
Burst from him in his triumph: to
Scornful he deign'd not; but with alter'd eye
Wherein some doubtful meaning seem'd to lie, [cried,
He turn'd to Kailyal. Maiden, thus he
I need not bid thee see
How vain it is to strive with Fate's decree, [from me,
When hither thou hast fled to fly
And lo! even here thou find'st me at thy side.
Mine thou must be, being doom'd with me to share
The Amreeta-cup of immortality;
Yea, by Myself I swear,
It hath been thus appointed. Joyfully
Join then thy hand and heart and will with mine,
Nor at such glorious destiny repine,
Nor in thy folly more provoke my wrath divine.

10

She answer'd; I have said. It must not be!
Almighty as thou art,
Thou hast put all things underneath thy feet;
But still the resolute heart
And virtuous will are free.
Never, oh! never, . . never . . can there be [me.
Communion, Rajah, between thee and

11

Once more, quoth he, I urge, and once alone.
Thou seest yon Golden Throne,
Where I anon shall set thee by my side;
Take thou thy seat thereon,
Kehama's willing bride,

And I will place the Kingdoms of the World
Beneath thy Father's feet,
Appointing him the King of mortal men:
Else underneath that Throne,
The Fourth supporter he shall stand and groan;
Prayers will be vain to move my mercy then.

12

Again the Virgin answer'd, I have said!
Ladurlad caught her in his proud embrace,
While on his neck she hid
In agony her face.

13

Bring forth the Amreeta-cup! Kehama cried
To Yamen, rising sternly in his pride.
It is within the Marble Sepulchre,
The vanquish'd Lord of Padalon replied,
Bid it be open'd. Give thy treasure up!
Exclaim'd the Man-Almighty to the Tomb.
And at his voice and look
The massy fabric shook, and open'd wide.
A huge Anatomy was seen reclined
Within its marble womb. Give me the Cup!
Again Kehama cried; no other charm
Was needed than that voice of stern command.
From his repose the ghastly form arose,
Put forth his bony and gigantic arm,
And gave the Amreeta to the Rajah's hand.
Take! drink! with accents dread the Spectre said,
For thee and Kailyal hath it been assign'd,
Ye only of the Children of Mankind.

14

Then was the Man-Almighty's heart elate;
This is the consummation! he exclaim'd;
Thus have I triumphed over Death and Fate.
Now, Seeva! look to thine abode!
Henceforth, on equal footing we engage,
Alike immortal now, and we shall wage
Our warfare, God to God!
Joy fill'd his impious soul,
And to his lips he raised the fatal bowl.

15

Thus long the Glendoveer had stood
Watching the wonders of the eventful hour,
Amazed but undismay'd; for in his heart
Faith, overcoming fear, maintain'd its power.
Nor had that faith abated, when the God
Of Padalon was beaten down in fight;
For then he look'd to see the heavenly might [now
Of Seeva break upon them. But when
He saw the Amreeta in Kehama's hand,
An impulse which defied all self-command
In that extremity
Stung him, and he resolved to seize the cup,
And dare the Rajah's force in Seeva's sight.
Forward he sprung to tempt the unequal fray,
When lo! the Anatomy,
With warning arm, withstood his desperate way,
And from the Golden Throne the fiery Three
Again, in one accord, renew'd their song, [long.
Kehama, come! we wait for thee too

16

O fool of drunken hope and frantic vice!
Madman! to seek for power beyond thy scope
Of knowledge, and to deem
Less than Omniscience could suffice
To wield Omnipotence! O fool, to dream
That immortality could be
The meed of evil!.. yea thou hast it now,
Victim of thine own wicked heart's device,
Thou hast thine object now, and now must pay the price.

17

He did not know the holy mystery
Of that divinest cup, that as the lips
Which touch it, even such its quality,
Good or malignant: Madman! and he thinks
The blessed prize is won, and joyfully he drinks.

18

Then Seeva open'd on the Accursed One
His Eye of Anger: upon him alone
The wrath-beam fell. He shudders.. but too late;
The deed is done,
The dreadful liquor works the will of Fate.
Immortal he would be,
Immortal he is made; but through his veins
Torture at once and immortality,
A stream of poison doth the Amreeta run,
And while within the burning anguish flows,
His outward body glows
Like molten ore, beneath the avenging Eye,
Doom'd thus to live and burn eternally.

19

The fiery Three,
Beholding him, set up a fiendish cry,
A song of jubilee; [long
Come, Brother, come! they sung; too
Have we expected thee,
Henceforth we bear no more
The unequal weight; Come, Brother, we are Four!

20

Vain his almightiness, for mightier pain
Subdued all power; pain ruled supreme alone;
And yielding to the bony hand
The unemptied cup, he moved toward the Throne,
And at the vacant corner took his stand.
Behold the Golden Throne at length complete,
And Yamen silently ascends the Judgement-seat.

21

For two alone, of all mankind, to me
The Amreeta Cup was given,
Then said the Anatomy;
The Man hath drunk, the Woman's turn is next.
Come, Kailyal, come, receive thy doom,
And do the Will of Heaven!.. 251
Wonder, and Fear, and Awe at once perplext
The mortal Maiden's heart, but over all
Hope rose triumphant. With a trembling hand,
Obedient to his call,
She took the fated Cup; and, lifting up
Her eyes, where holy tears began to swell,
Is it not your command,
Ye heavenly Powers? as on her knees she fell,
The pious Virgin cried; 260
Ye know my innocent will, my heart sincere,
Ye govern all things still,
And wherefore should I fear!

22

She said, and drank. The Eye of Mercy beam'd
Upon the Maid: a cloud of fragrance steam'd
Like incense-smoke, as all her mortal frame
Dissolved beneath the potent agency
Of that mysterious draught; such quality,
From her pure touch, the fated Cup partook.
Like one entranced she knelt,
Feeling her body melt
Till all but what was heavenly pass'd away:
Yet still she felt
Her Spirit strong within her, the same heart,
With the same loves, and all her heavenly part
Unchang'd, and ripen'd to such perfect state [Earth,
In this miraculous birth, as here on
Dimly our holiest hopes anticipate.

23

Mine! mine! with rapturous joy Ereenia cried,
Immortal now, and yet not more divine;
Mine, mine, . . for ever mine!
The immortal Maid replied,
For ever, ever, thine!

24

Then Yamen said, O thou to whom by Fate,
Alone of all mankind, this lot is given,
Daughter of Earth, but now the Child of Heaven!
Go with thy heavenly Mate,
Partaker now of his immortal bliss;
Go to the Swerga Bowers,
And there recall the hours
Of endless happiness.

25

But that sweet Angel, for she still retain'd
Her human loves and human piety,
As if reluctant at the God's commands,
Linger'd, with anxious eye
Upon her Father fix'd, and spread her hands
Toward him wistfully.
Go! Yamen said, nor cast that look behind
Upon Ladurlad at this parting hour,
For thou shalt find him in thy Mother's Bower.

26

The Car, for Carmala his word obey'd,
Moved on, and bore away the Maid,
While from the Golden Throne the Lord of Death
With love benignant on Ladurlad smiled,
And gently on his head his blessing laid.
As sweetly as a Child,
Whom neither thought disturbs nor care encumbers,
Tired with long play, at close of summer day,
Lies down and slumbers,
Even thus as sweet a boon of sleep partaking,
By Yamen blest, Ladurlad sunk to rest.
Blessed that sleep! more blessed was the waking!
For on that night a heavenly morning broke,
The light of heaven was round him when he woke,
And in the Swerga, in Yedillian's Bower,
All whom he loved he met, to part no more.

RODERICK,
THE LAST OF THE GOTHS:

A TRAGIC POEM.

'Tanto acrior apud majores, sicut virtutibus gloria, ita flagitiis poenitentia, fuit. Sed haec aliaque, ex veteri memoria petita, quotiens res locusque exempla recti, aut solatia mali, poscet, haud absurde memorabimus.'—*Taciti Hist.* lib. iii. c. 51.

TO
GROSVENOR CHARLES BEDFORD,
THIS POEM IS INSCRIBED,
IN LASTING MEMORIAL OF A LONG AND UNINTERRUPTED FRIENDSHIP,
BY HIS OLD SCHOOLFELLOW,
ROBERT SOUTHEY.

. . . 'As the ample Moon,
In the deep stillness of a summer even
Rising behind a thick and lofty Grove,
Burns like an unconsuming fire of light
In the green trees; and kindling on all sides
Their leafy umbrage, turns the dusky veil
Into a substance glorious as her own,
Yea, with her own incorporated, by power
Capacious and serene: Like power abides
In Man's celestial Spirit; Virtue thus
Sets forth and magnifies herself; thus feeds
A calm, a beautiful and silent fire,
From the incumbrances of mortal life,
From error, disappointment, . . nay from guilt;
And sometimes, so relenting Justice wills,
From palpable oppressions of Despair.'
Wordsworth.

PREFACE.

THE history of the Wisi-Goths for some years before their overthrow is very imperfectly known. It is, however, apparent, that the enmity between the royal families of Chindasuintho and Wamba was one main cause of the destruction of the kingdom, the latter party having assisted in betraying their country to the Moors for the gratification of their own revenge. Theodofred and Favila were younger sons of King Chindasuintho; King Witiza, who was of Wamba's family, put out the eyes of Theodofred, and murdered Favila, at the instigation of that Chieftain's wife, with whom he lived in adultery. Pelayo, the son of Favila, and afterwards the founder of the Spanish monarchy, was driven into exile. Roderick, the son of Theodofred, recovered the throne, and put out Witiza's eyes in vengeance for his father; but he spared Orpas, the brother of the tyrant, as being a Priest, and Ebba and Sisibert, the two sons of Witiza, by Pelayo's mother. It may be convenient thus briefly to premise these circumstances of an obscure portion of history, with which few readers can be supposed to be familiar; and a list of the principal persons who are introduced, or spoken of, may as properly be prefixed to a Poem as to a Play.

WITIZA, ... King of the Wisi-Goths; dethroned and blinded by Roderick.
THEODOFRED, .. son of King Chindasuintho, blinded by King Witiza.
FAVILA, ... his brother; put to death by Witiza.
The Wife of Favila, Witiza's adulterous mistress.
(*These four persons are dead before the action of the poem commences.*)

. . . . . .

RODERICK, ... the last King of the Wisi-Goths: son of Theodofred.
PELAYO, ... the founder of the Spanish Monarchy: son of Favila.
GAUDIOSA, ... his wife.
GUISLA, ... his sister.
FAVILA, ... his son.
HERMESIND, ... his daughter.
RUSILLA, ... widow of Theodofred, and mother of Roderick.
COUNT PEDRO, } powerful Lords of Can-
COUNT EUDON, } tabria.
ALPHONSO, ... Count Pedro's son, afterwards King.
URBAN, ... Archbishop of Toledo.
ROMANO, ... a Monk of the Caulian Schools, near Merida.
ABDALAZIZ, ... the Moorish Governor of Spain.
EGILONA, ... formerly the wife of Roderick, now of Abdalaziz.

ABULCACEM, ..
ALCAHMAN, ..
AYUB, ... } Moorish Chiefs.
IBRAHIM, ...
MAGUED, ...
ORPAS, ... brother to Witiza, and formerly Archbishop of Seville, now a renegade.
SISIBERT, ... } sons of Witiza and of
EBBA, ... } Pelayo's mother.
NUMACIAN, ... a renegade, governor of Gegio.
COUNT JULIAN, . a powerful Lord among the Wisi-Goths, now a renegade.
FLORINDA, ... his daughter, violated by King Roderick.

. . . . . .

ADOSINDA, ... daughter of the Governor of Auria.
ODOAR, ... Abbot of St. Felix.
SIVERIAN, ... Roderick's foster-father.
FAVINIA, ... Count Pedro's wife.

The four latter persons are imaginary. All the others are mentioned in history. I ought, however, to observe that Romano is a creature of monkish legends; that the name of Pelayo's sister has not been preserved; and that that of Roderick's mother, Ruscilo, has been altered to Rusilla, for the sake of euphony.

RODERICK, THE LAST OF THE GOTHS.

I. RODERICK AND ROMANO

LONG had the crimes of Spain cried out to Heaven;
At length the measure of offence was full.
Count Julian call'd the invaders; not because
Inhuman priests with unoffending blood
Had stain'd their country; not because a yoke
Of iron servitude oppress'd and gall'd
The children of the soil; a private wrong
Roused the remorseless Baron. Mad to wreak
His vengeance for his violated child
On Roderick's head, in evil hour for Spain,
For that unhappy daughter and himself,
Desperate apostate . . on the Moors he call'd;
And like a cloud of locusts, whom the South
Wafts from the plains of wasted Africa,
The Musselmen upon Iberia's shore
Descend. A countless multitude they came;
Syrian, Moor, Saracen, Greek renegade,
Persian and Copt and Tatar, in one bond
Of erring faith conjoin'd, . . strong in the youth
And heat of zeal, . . a dreadful brotherhood,
In whom all turbulent vices were let loose;

While Conscience, with their impious creed accurst,
Drunk as with wine, had sanctified to them
All bloody, all abominable things.

Thou, Calpe, saw'st their coming; ancient Rock
Renown'd, no longer now shalt thou be call'd
From Gods and Heroes of the years of yore,
Kronos, or hundred-handed Briareus,
Bacchus or Hercules; but doom'd to bear
The name of thy new conqueror, and thenceforth
To stand his everlasting monument.
Thou saw'st the dark-blue waters flash before
Their ominous way, and whiten round their keels;
Their swarthy myriads darkening o'er thy sands.
There on the beach the Misbelievers spread
Their banners, flaunting to the sun and breeze;
Fair shone the sun upon their proud array,
White turbans, glittering armour, shields engrail'd
With gold, and scymitars of Syrian steel;
And gently did the breezes, as in sport,
Curl their long flags outrolling, and display
The blazon'd scrolls of blasphemy. Too soon
The gales of Spain from that unhappy land
Wafted, as from an open charnel-house,
The taint of death; and that bright sun, from fields
Of slaughter, with the morning dew drew up
Corruption through the infected atmosphere.

Then fell the kingdom of the Goths; their hour
Was come, and Vengeance, long withheld, went loose.
Famine and Pestilence had wasted them,
And Treason, like an old and eating sore,
Consumed the bones and sinews of their strength;
And worst of enemies, their Sins were arm'd
Against them. Yet the sceptre from their hands
Pass'd not away inglorious, nor was shame
Left for their children's lasting heritage;
Eight summer days, from morn till latest eve,
The fatal fight endured, till perfidy
Prevailing to their overthrow, they sunk
Defeated, not dishonour'd. On the banks
Of Chrysus, Roderick's royal car was found,
His battle-horse Orelio, and that helm
Whose horns, amid the thickest of the fray
Eminent, had mark'd his presence. Did the stream
Receive him with the undistinguish'd dead,
Christian and Moor, who clogg'd its course that day?
So thought the Conqueror, and from that day forth,
Memorial of his perfect victory,
He bade the river bear the name of Joy.
So thought the Goths; they said no prayer for him,
For him no service sung, nor mourning made,
But charged their crimes upon his head, and curs'd
His memory.

Bravely in that eight-days' fight
The King had striven, . . for victory first, while hope

Remain'd, then desperately in search of death.
The arrows pass'd him by to right and left,
The spear-point pierced him not, the scymitar
Glanced from his helmet. Is the shield of Heaven,
Wretch that I am, extended over me ?
Cried Roderick; and he dropt Orelio's reins,
And threw his hands aloft in frantic prayer, . .
Death is the only mercy that I crave,
Death soon and short, death and forgetfulness !
Aloud he cried; but in his inmost heart
There answer'd him a secret voice, that spake
Of righteousness and judgement after death,
And God's redeeming love, which fain would save
The guilty soul alive. 'Twas agony,
And yet 'twas hope; . . a momentary light,
That flash'd through utter darkness on the Cross
To point salvation, then left all within
Dark as before. Fear, never felt till then,
Sudden and irresistible as stroke
Of lightning, smote him. From his horse he dropt,
Whether with human impulse, or by Heaven
Struck down, he knew not; loosen'd from his wrist
The sword-chain, and let fall the sword, whose hilt
Clung to his palm a moment ere it fell,
Glued there with Moorish gore. His royal robe,
His horned helmet and enamell'd mail,
He cast aside, and taking from the dead
A peasant's garment, in those weeds involved
Stole, like a thief in darkness, from the field.

Evening closed round to favour him. All night
He fled, the sound of battle in his ear
Ringing, and sights of death before his eyes,
With forms more horrible of eager fiends
That seem'd to hover round, and gulphs of fire
Opening beneath his feet. At times the groan
Of some poor fugitive, who, bearing with him
His mortal hurt, had fallen beside the way,
Roused him from these dread visions, and he call'd
In answering groans on his Redeemer's name,
That word the only prayer that pass'd his lips
Or rose within his heart. Then would he see
The Cross whereon a bleeding Saviour hung,
Who call'd on him to come and cleanse his soul
In those all-healing streams, which from his wounds,
As from perpetual springs, for ever flow'd.
No hart e'er panted for the water-brooks
As Roderick thirsted there to drink and live;
But Hell was interposed; and worse than Hell . .
Yea to his eyes more dreadful than the fiends
Who flock'd like hungry ravens round his head, . .

Florinda stood between, and warn'd him off
With her abhorrent hands, . . that agony
Still in her face, which, when the deed was done,
Inflicted on her ravisher the curse
That it invoked from Heaven. . . Oh what a night
Of waking horrors! Nor when morning came
Did the realities of light and day
Bring aught of comfort; wheresoe'er he went
The tidings of defeat had gone before;
And leaving their defenceless homes to seek
What shelter walls and battlements might yield,
Old men with feeble feet, and tottering babes,
And widows with their infants in their arms,
Hurried along. Nor royal festival,
Nor sacred pageant, with like multitudes
E'er fill'd the public way. All whom the sword
Had spared were here; bed-rid infirmity
Alone was left behind; the cripple plied
His crutches, with her child of yesterday
The mother fled, and she whose hour was come
Fell by the road.
Less dreadful than this view
Of outward suffering which the day disclosed,
Had night and darkness seem'd to Roderick's heart,
With all their dread creations. From the throng
He turn'd aside, unable to endure
This burthen of the general woe; nor walls,
Nor towers, nor mountain fastnesses he sought,
A firmer hold his spirit yearn'd to find,
A rock of surer strength. Unknowing where,
Straight through the wild he hasten'd on all day,
And with unslacken'd speed was travelling still
When evening gather'd round. Seven days from morn
Till night he travell'd thus; the forest oaks,
The fig-grove by the fearful husbandman
Forsaken to the spoiler, and the vines,
Where fox and household dog together now
Fed on the vintage, gave him food; the hand
Of Heaven was on him, and the agony
Which wrought within, supplied a strength beyond
All natural force of man.
When the eighth eve
Was come, he found himself on Ana's banks,
Fast by the Caulian Schools. It was the hour
Of vespers, but no vesper bell was heard,
Nor other sound, than of the passing stream,
Or stork, who flapping with wide wing the air,
Sought her broad nest upon the silent tower.
Brethren and pupils thence alike had fled
To save themselves within the embattled walls
Of neighbouring Merida. One aged Monk
Alone was left behind; he would not leave
The sacred spot beloved, for having served
There from his childhood up to ripe old age

God's holy altar, it became him now,
He thought, before that altar to await
The merciless misbelievers, and lay down
His life, a willing martyr. So he staid
When all were gone, and duly fed the lamps,
And kept devotedly the altar drest,
And duly offer'd up the sacrifice.
Four days and nights he thus had pass'd alone,
In such high mood of saintly fortitude,
That hope of Heaven became a heavenly joy;
And now at evening to the gate he went
If he might spy the Moors, . . for it seem'd long
To tarry for his crown.
Before the Cross
Roderick had thrown himself; his body raised,
Half kneeling, half at length he lay; his arms
Embraced its foot, and from his lifted face
Tears streaming down bedew'd the senseless stone.
He had not wept till now, and at the gush
Of these first tears, it seem'd as if his heart,
From a long winter's icy thrall let loose,
Had open'd to the genial influences
Of Heaven. In attitude, but not in act
Of prayer he lay; an agony of tears
Was all his soul could offer. When the Monk
Beheld him suffering thus, he raised him up,
And took him by the arm, and led him in;
And there before the altar, in the name
Of Him whose bleeding image there was hung,
Spake comfort, and adjured him in that name
There to lay down the burthen of his sins.
Lo! said Romano, I am waiting here
The coming of the Moors, that from their hands
My spirit may receive the purple robe
Of martyrdom, and rise to claim its crown.
That God who willeth not the sinner's death
Hath led thee hither. Threescore years and five,
Even from the hour when I, a five-years' child,
Enter'd the schools, have I continued here
And served the altar: not in all those years
Hath such a contrite and a broken heart
Appear'd before me. O my brother, Heaven
Hath sent thee for thy comfort, and for mine,
That my last earthly act may reconcile
A sinner to his God.
Then Roderick knelt
Before the holy man, and strove to speak.
Thou seest, he cried, . . thou seest, . . but memory
And suffocating thoughts repress'd the word,
And shudderings, like an ague fit, from head
To foot convulsed him; till at length, subduing
His nature to the effort, he exclaim'd,
Spreading his hands and lifting up his face,
As if resolved in penitence to bear
A human eye upon his shame, . . Thou seest
Roderick the Goth! That name would have sufficed
To tell its whole abhorred history:

He not the less pursued, . . the ravisher,
The cause of all this ruin ! Having said,
In the same posture motionless he knelt,
Arms straighten'd down, and hands outspread, and eyes
Raised to the Monk, like one who from his voice
Awaited life or death.
All night the old man
Pray'd with his penitent, and minister'd
Unto the wounded soul, till he infused
A healing hope of mercy that allay'd
Its heat of anguish. But Romano saw
What strong temptations of despair beset,
And how he needed in this second birth,
Even like a yearling child, a fosterer's care.
Father in Heaven, he cried, thy will be done !
Surely I hoped that I this day should sing
Hosannahs at thy throne; but thou hast yet
Work for thy servant here. He girt his loins,
And from her altar took with reverent hands
Our Lady's image down: In this, quoth he,
We have our guide and guard and comforter,
The best provision for our perilous way.
Fear not but we shall find a resting-place,
The Almighty's hand is on us.
They went forth,
They cross'd the stream, and when Romano turn'd
For his last look toward the Caulian towers,
Far off the Moorish standards in the light
Of morn were glittering, where the miscreant host
Toward the Lusitanian capital
To lay their siege advanced ; the eastern breeze
Bore to the fearful travellers far away
The sound of horn and tambour o'er the plain.
All day they hasten'd, and when evening fell
Sped toward the setting sun, as if its line
Of glory came from Heaven to point their course.
But feeble were the feet of that old man
For such a weary length of way ; and now
Being pass'd the danger (for in Merida
Sacaru long in resolute defence
Withstood the tide of war,) with easier pace
The wanderers journey'd on ; till having cross'd
Rich Tagus, and the rapid Zezere,
They from Albardos' hoary height beheld
Pine-forest, fruitful vale, and that fair lake
Where Alcoa, mingled there with Baza's stream,
Rests on its passage to the western sea,
That sea the aim and boundary of their toil.

The fourth week of their painful pilgrimage
Was full, when they arrived where from the land
A rocky hill, rising with steep ascent,
O'erhung the glittering beach ; there on the top
A little lowly hermitage they found,
And a rude Cross, and at its foot a grave,
Bearing no name, nor other monument.
Where better could they rest than here, where faith
And secret penitence and happiest death

Had bless'd the spot, and brought good Angels down,
And open'd as it were a way to Heaven ?
Behind them was the desert, offering fruit
And water for their need: on either side
The white sand sparkling to the sun; in front,
Great Ocean with its everlasting voice,
As in perpetual jubilee, proclaim'd,
The wonders of the Almighty, filling thus
The pauses of their fervent orisons.
Where better could the wanderers rest than here ?

II. RODERICK IN SOLITUDE

Twelve months they sojourn'd in their solitude,
And then beneath the burthen of old age
Romano sunk. No brethren were there here
To spread the sackcloth, and with ashes strew
That penitential bed, and gather round
To sing his requiem, and with prayer and psalm
Assist him in his hour of agony.
He lay on the bare earth, which long had been
His only couch; beside him Roderick knelt,
Moisten'd from time to time his blacken'd lips,
Received a blessing with his latest breath,
Then closed his eyes, and by the nameless grave
Of the fore-tenant of that holy place
Consign'd him earth to earth.
Two graves are here,
And Roderick transverse at their feet began
To break the third. In all his intervals
Of prayer, save only when he search'd the woods
And fill'd the water-cruise, he labour'd there;
And when the work was done and he had laid
Himself at length within its narrow sides
And measured it, he shook his head to think
There was no other business now for him.
Poor wretch, thy bed is ready, he exclaim'd,
And would that night were come! . . It was a task,
All gloomy as it was, which had beguiled
The sense of solitude; but now he felt
The burthen of the solitary hours:
The silence of that lonely hermitage
Lay on him like a spell; and at the voice
Of his own prayers, he started half aghast.
Then too as on Romano's grave he sate
And pored upon his own, a natural thought
Arose within him, . . well might he have spared
That useless toil; the sepulchre would be
No hiding place for him; no Christian hands
Were here who should compose his decent corpse
And cover it with earth. There he might drag
His wretched body at its passing hour,
But there the Sea-Birds of her heritage
Would rob the worm, or peradventure seize,
Ere death had done its work, their helpless prey.
Even now they did not fear him: when he walk'd

Beside them on the beach, regardlessly
They saw his coming; and their whirring wings
Upon the height had sometimes fann'd his cheek,
As if, being thus alone, humanity
Had lost its rank, and the prerogative
Of man were done away.
For his lost crown
And sceptre never had he felt a thought
Of pain; repentance had no pangs to spare
For trifles such as these, . . the loss of these
Was a cheap penalty; . . that he had fallen
Down to the lowest depth of wretchedness,
His hope and consolation. But to lose
His human station in the scale of things, . .
To see brute nature scorn him, and renounce
Its homage to the human form divine; . .
Had then Almighty vengeance thus reveal'd
His punishment, and was he fallen indeed
Below fallen man, below redemption's reach, . .
Made lower than the beasts, and like the beasts
To perish! . . Such temptations troubled him
By day, and in the visions of the night;
And even in sleep he struggled with the thought,
And waking with the effort of his prayers
The dream assail'd him still.
A wilder form
Sometimes his poignant penitence assumed,
Starting with force revived from intervals
Of calmer passion, or exhausted rest;
When floating back upon the tide of thought
Remembrance to a self-excusing strain
Beguiled him, and recall'd in long array
The sorrows and the secret impulses
Which to the abyss of wretchedness and guilt
Led their unwary victim. The evil hour
Return'd upon him, when reluctantly
Yielding to worldly counsel his assent,
In wedlock to an ill-assorted mate
He gave his cold unwilling hand: then came
The disappointment of the barren bed,
The hope deceived, the soul dissatisfied,
Home without love, and privacy from which
Delight was banish'd first, and peace too soon
Departed. Was it strange that when he met
A heart attuned, . . a spirit like his own,
Of lofty pitch, yet in affection mild,
And tender as a youthful mother's joy, . .
Oh was it strange if at such sympathy
The feelings which within his breast repell'd
And chill'd had shrunk, should open forth like flowers
After cold winds of night, when gentle gales
Restore the genial sun? If all were known,
Would it indeed be not to be forgiven? . .
(Thus would he lay the unction to his soul,)
If all were truly known, as Heaven knows all,
Heaven that is merciful as well as just, . .
A passion slow and mutual in its growth,
Pure as fraternal love, long self-conceal'd,
And when confess'd in silence, long controll'd;

Treacherous occasion, human frailty, fear
Of endless separation, worse than death, . .
The purpose and the hope with which the Fiend
Tempted, deceived, and madden'd him; . . but then
As at a new temptation would he start,
Shuddering beneath the intolerable shame,
And clench in agony his matted hair;
While in his soul the perilous thought arose,
How easy 'twere to plunge where yonder waves
Invited him to rest.
Oh for a voice
Of comfort, . . for a ray of hope from Heaven!
A hand that from these billows of despair
May reach and snatch him ere he sink engulph'd!
At length, as life when it hath lain long time
Oppress'd beneath some grievous malady,
Seems to rouse up with re-collected strength,
And the sick man doth feel within himself
A second spring; so Roderick's better mind
Arose to save him. Lo! the western sun
Flames o'er the broad Atlantic; on the verge
Of glowing ocean rests; retiring then
Draws with it all its rays, and sudden night
Fills the whole cope of heaven. The penitent
Knelt by Romano's grave, and falling prone,
Clasp'd with extended arms the funeral mould.
Father! he cried; Companion! only friend,
When all beside was lost! thou too art gone,
And the poor sinner whom from utter death
Thy providential hand preserved, once more
Totters upon the gulph. I am too weak
For solitude, . . too vile a wretch to bear
This everlasting commune with myself.
The Tempter hath assail'd me; my own heart
Is leagued with him; Despair hath laid the nets
To take my soul, and Memory like a ghost,
Haunts me, and drives me to the toils.
O Saint,
While I was blest with thee, the hermitage
Was my sure haven! Look upon me still,
For from thy heavenly mansion thou canst see
The suppliant; look upon thy child in Christ,
Is there no other way for penitence?
I ask not martyrdom; for what am I
That I should pray for triumphs, the fit meed
Of a long life of holy works like thine;
Or how should I presumptuously aspire
To wear the heavenly crown resign'd by thee,
For my poor sinful sake? Oh point me thou
Some humblest, painfulest, severest path, . .
Some new austerity, unheard of yet
In Syrian fields of glory, or the sands
Of holiest Egypt. Let me bind my brow
With thorns, and barefoot seek Jerusalem,

Tracking the way with blood; there day by day
Inflict upon this guilty flesh the scourge,
Drink vinegar and gall, and for my bed
Hang with extended limbs upon the Cross,
A nightly crucifixion! . . any thing
Of action, difficulty, bodily pain,
Labour, and outward suffering, . . any thing
But stillness and this dreadful solitude!
Romano! Father! let me hear thy voice
In dreams, O sainted Soul! or from the grave
Speak to thy penitent; even from the grave
Thine were a voice of comfort.
Thus he cried,
Easing the pressure of his burthen'd heart
With passionate prayer; thus pour'd his spirit forth,
Till with the long impetuous effort spent
His spirit fail'd, and laying on the grave
His weary head as on a pillow, sleep
Fell on him. He had pray'd to hear a voice
Of consolation, and in dreams a voice
Of consolation came. Roderick, it said, . .
Roderick, my poor, unhappy, sinful child,
Jesus have mercy on thee! . . Not if Heaven
Had opened, and Romano, visible
In his beatitude, had breathed that prayer; . .
Not if the grave had spoken, had it pierced
So deeply in his soul, nor wrung his heart
With such compunctious visitings, nor given
So quick, so keen a pang. It was that voice
Which sung his fretful infancy to sleep
So patiently; which soothed his childish griefs,
Counsell'd, with anguish and prophetic tears,
His headstrong youth. And lo! his Mother stood
Before him in the vision; in those weeds
Which never from the hour when to the grave
She follow'd her dear lord Theodofred
Rusilla laid aside; but in her face
A sorrow that bespake a heavier load
At heart, and more unmitigated woe, . .
Yea a more mortal wretchedness than when
Witiza's ruffians and the red-hot brass
Had done their work, and in her arms she held
Her eyeless husband; wiped away the sweat
Which still his tortures forced from every pore;
Cool'd his scorch'd lids with medicinal herbs,
And pray'd the while for patience for herself
And him, and pray'd for vengeance too, and found
Best comfort in her curses. In his dream,
Groaning he knelt before her to beseech
Her blessing, and she raised her hands to lay
A benediction on him. But those hands
Were chain'd, and casting a wild look around,
With thrilling voice she cried, Will no one break
These shameful fetters? Pedro, Theudemir,
Athanagild, where are ye? Roderick's arm
Is wither'd; . . Chiefs of Spain, but where are ye?

And thou, Pelayo, thou our surest hope,
Dost thou too sleep ? . . Awake, Pelayo ! . . up ! . .
Why tarriest thou, Deliverer ? . . But with that
She broke her bonds, and lo ! her form was changed !
Radiant in arms she stood ! a bloody Cross
Gleam'd on her breast-plate, in her shield display'd
Erect a lion ramp'd ; her helmed head
Rose like the Berecynthian Goddess crown'd
With towers, and in her dreadful hand the sword
Red as a fire-brand blazed. Anon the tramp
Of horsemen, and the din of multitudes
Moving to mortal conflict, rang around ;
The battle-song, the clang of sword and shield,
War-cries and tumult, strife and hate and rage,
Blasphemous prayers, confusion, agony,
Rout and pursuit and death ; and over all
The shout of victory. . . Spain and Victory !
Roderick, as the strong vision master'd him,
Rush'd to the fight rejoicing : starting then,
As his own effort burst the charm of sleep,
He found himself upon that lonely grave
In moonlight and in silence. But the dream
Wrought in him still ; for still he felt his heart
Pant, and his wither'd arm was trembling still ;
And still that voice was in his ear which call'd
On Jesus for his sake.
Oh, might he hear
That actual voice ! and if Rusilla lived, . .
If shame and anguish for his crimes not yet
Had brought her to the grave, . . sure she would bless
Her penitent child, and pour into his heart
Prayers and forgiveness, which, like precious balm,
Would heal the wounded soul. Nor to herself
Less precious, or less healing, would the voice
That spake forgiveness flow. She wept her son
For ever lost, cut off with all the weight
Of unrepented sin upon his head,
Sin which had weigh'd a nation down . . what joy
To know that righteous Heaven had in its wrath
Remember'd mercy, and she yet might meet
The child whom she had borne, redeem'd, in bliss.
The sudden impulse of such thoughts confirmed
That unacknowledged purpose, which till now
Vainly had sought its end. He girt his loins,
Laid holiest Mary's image in a cleft
Of the rock, where, shelter'd from the elements,
It might abide till happier days came on,
From all defilement safe ; pour'd his last prayer
Upon Romano's grave, and kiss'd the earth
Which cover'd his remains, and wept as if
At long leave-taking, then began his way.

III. ADOSINDA

'Twas now the earliest morning; soon the Sun,
Rising above Albardos, pour'd his light
Amid the forest, and with ray aslant
Entering its depth, illumed the branchless pines,
Brighten'd their bark, tinged with a redder hue
Its rusty stains, and cast along the floor
Long lines of shadow, where they rose erect
Like pillars of the temple. With slow foot
Roderick pursued his way; for penitence,
Remorse which gave no respite, and the long
And painful conflict of his troubled soul,
Had worn him down. Now brighter thoughts arose,
And that triumphant vision floated still
Before his sight with all her blazonry,
Her castled helm, and the victorious sword
That flash'd like lightning o'er the field of blood.
Sustain'd by thoughts like these, from morn till eve
He journey'd, and drew near Leyria's walls.
'Twas even-song time, but not a bell was heard;
Instead thereof, on her polluted towers,
Bidding the Moors to their unhallow'd prayer,
The cryer stood, and with his sonorous voice
Fill'd the delicious vale where Lena winds
Thro' groves and pastoral meads. The sound, the sight
Of turban, girdle, robe, and scymitar,
And tawny skins, awoke contending thoughts
Of anger, shame, and anguish in the Goth;
The face of human-kind so long unseen
Confused him now, and through the streets he went
With haggëd mien, and countenance like one
Crazed or bewilder'd. All who met him turn'd,
And wonder'd as he pass'd. One stopt him short,
Put alms into his hand, and then desired
In broken Gothic speech, the moon-struck man
To bless him. With a look of vacancy
Roderick received the alms; his wandering eye
Fell on the money, and the fallen King,
Seeing his own royal impress on the piece,
Broke out into a quick convulsive voice,
That seem'd like laughter first, but ended soon
In hollow groans supprest; the Mussel-man
Shrunk at the ghastly sound, and magnified
The name of Allah as he hasten'd on.
A Christian woman spinning at her door
Beheld him, and, with sudden pity touch'd,
She laid her spindle by, and running in
Took bread, and following after call'd him back,
And placing in his passive hands the loaf,
She said, Christ Jesus for his mother's sake
Have mercy on thee! With a look that seem'd
Like idiotcy he heard her, and stood still,
Staring awhile; then bursting into tears
Wept like a child, and thus relieved his heart,

Full even to bursting else with swelling thoughts.
So through the streets, and through the northern gate
Did Roderick, reckless of a resting-place,
With feeble yet with hurried step pursue
His agitated way; and when he reach'd
The open fields, and found himself alone
Beneath the starry canopy of Heaven,
The sense of solitude, so dreadful late,
Was then repose and comfort. There he stopt 62
Beside a little rill, and brake the loaf;
And shedding o'er that long untasted food
Painful but quiet tears, with grateful soul
He breathed thanksgiving forth, then made his bed
On heath and myrtle.
But when he arose
At day-break and pursued his way, his heart
Felt lighten'd that the shock of mingling first
Among his fellow-kind was overpast; 70
And journeying on, he greeted whom he met
With such short interchange of benison
As each to other gentle travellers give,
Recovering thus the power of social speech
Which he had long disused. When hunger prest
He ask'd for alms: slight supplication served;
A countenance so pale and woe-begone
Moved all to pity; and the marks it bore
Of rigorous penance and austerest life,
With something too of majesty that still
Appear'd amid the wreck, inspired a sense 81
Of reverence too. The goat-herd on the hills
Open'd his scrip for him; the babe in arms,
Affrighted at his visage, turn'd away,
And clinging to the mother's neck in tears
Would yet again look up, and then again
Shrink back, with cry renew'd. The bolder imps
Sporting beside the way, at his approach
Brake off their games for wonder, and stood still
In silence; some among them cried, A Saint! 90
The village matron when she gave him food
Besought his prayers; and one entreated him
To lay his healing hands upon her child,
For with a sore and hopeless malady
Wasting, it long had lain, . . and sure, she said,
He was a man of God.
Thus travelling on
He pass'd the vale where wild Arunca pours
Its wintry torrents; and the happier site
Of old Conimbrica, whose ruin'd towers
Bore record of the fierce Alani's wrath.
Mondego too he cross'd, not yet renown'd 101
In poets' amorous lay; and left behind
The walls at whose foundation pious hands
Of Priest and Monk and Bishop meekly toil'd, . .
So had the insulting Arian given command.
Those stately palaces and rich domains
Were now the Moor's, and many a weary age
Must Coimbra wear the misbeliever's yoke,
Before Fernando's banner through her gate

Shall pass triumphant, and her hallow'd Mosque
Behold the hero of Bivar receive
The knighthood which he glorified so oft
In his victorious fields. Oh, if the years
To come might then have risen on Roderick's soul,
How had they kindled and consoled his heart! . .
What joy might Douro's haven then have given,
Whence Portugal, the faithful and the brave,
Shall take her name illustrious! . . what, those walls
Where Mumadona one day will erect
Convent and town and towers, which shall become
The cradle of that famous monarchy!
What joy might these prophetic scenes have given, . .
What ample vengeance on the Musselman,
Driven out with foul defeat, and made to feel
In Africa the wrongs he wrought to Spain;
And still pursued by that relentless sword,
Even to the farthest Orient, where his power
Received its mortal wound.
O years of pride!
In undiscoverable futurity,
Yet unevolved, your destined glories lay;
And all that Roderick in these fated scenes
Beheld, was grief and wretchedness, . . the waste
Of recent war, and that more mournful calm
Of joyless, helpless, hopeless servitude.
'Twas not the ruin'd walls of church or tower,
Cottage or hall or convent, black with smoke;
'Twas not the unburied bones, which where the dogs
And crows had strewn them, lay amid the field
Bleaching in sun or shower, that wrung his heart
With keenest anguish: 'twas when he beheld
The turban'd traitor show his shameless front
In the open eye of Heaven, . . the renegade,
On whose base brutal nature unredeem'd
Even black apostacy itself could stamp
No deeper reprobation, at the hour
Assign'd fall prostrate; and unite the names
Of God and the Blasphemer, . . impious prayer, . .
Most impious, when from unbelieving lips
The accursëd utterance came. Then Roderick's heart
With indignation burnt, and then he long'd
To be a King again, that so, for Spain
Betray'd and his Redeemer thus renounced,
He might inflict due punishment, and make
These wretches feel his wrath. But when he saw
The daughters of the land, . . who, as they went
With cheerful step to church, were wont to show
Their innocent faces to all passers' eyes
Freely, and free from sin as when they look'd
In adoration and in praise to Heaven, . .
Now mask'd in Moorish mufflers, to the Mosque
Holding uncompanied their jealous way,

His spirit seem'd at that unhappy sight
To die away within him, and he too
Would fain have died, so death could bring with it
Entire oblivion.
Rent with thoughts like these
He reach'd that city, once the seat renown'd
Of Suevi kings, where, in contempt of Rome
Degenerate long, the North's heroic race
Raised first a rival throne; now from its state
Of proud regality debased and fallen.
Still bounteous nature o'er the lovely vale,
Where like a Queen rose Bracara august,
Pour'd forth her gifts profuse; perennial springs
Flow'd for her habitants, and genial suns,
With kindly showers to bless the happy clime,
Combined in vain their gentle influences;
For patient servitude was there, who bow'd
His neck beneath the Moor, and silent grief
That eats into the soul. The walls and stones
Seem'd to reproach their dwellers; stately piles
Yet undecayed, the mighty monuments
Of Roman pomp, Barbaric palaces,
And Gothic halls, where haughty Barons late
Gladden'd their faithful vassals with the feast
And flowing bowl, alike the spoiler's now.

Leaving these captive scenes behind, he crost
Cavado's silver current, and the banks
Of Lima, through whose groves in after years,
Mournful yet sweet, Diogo's amorous lute
Prolong'd its tuneful echoes. But when now
Beyond Arnoya's tributary tide,
He came where Minho roll'd its ampler stream
By Auria's ancient walls, fresh horrors met
His startled view; for prostrate in the dust
Those walls were laid, and towers and temples stood
Tottering in frightful ruins, as the flame
Had left them black and bare; and through the streets,
All with the recent wreck of war bestrewn,
Helmet and turban, scymitar and sword,
Christian and Moor in death promiscuous lay
Each where they fell; and blood-flakes, parch'd and crack'd
Like the dry slime of some receding flood;
And half-burnt bodies, which allured from far
The wolf and raven, and to impious food
Tempted the houseless dog.
A thrilling pang,
A sweat like death, a sickness of the soul,
Came over Roderick. Soon they pass'd away,
And admiration in their stead arose,
Stern joy, and inextinguishable hope,
With wrath, and hate, and sacred vengeance now
Indissolubly link'd. O valiant race,
O people excellently brave, he cried,
True Goths ye fell, and faithful to the last;
Though overpower'd, triumphant, and in death
Unconquer'd! Holy be your memory!
Bless'd and glorious now and evermore

Be your heroic names! . . Led by the sound,
As thus he cried aloud, a woman came
Toward him from the ruins. For the love
Of Christ, she said, lend me a little while
Thy charitable help! . . Her words, her voice,
Her look, more horror to his heart convey'd
Than all the havoc round: for though she spake
With the calm utterance of despair, in tones
Deep-breathed and low, yet never sweeter voice
Pour'd forth its hymns in ecstasy to Heaven.
Her hands were bloody, and her garments stain'd
With blood, her face with blood and dust defiled.
Beauty and youth, and grace and majesty,
Had every charm of form and feature given;
But now upon her rigid countenance
Severest anguish set a fixedness
Ghastlier than death.
She led him through the streets
A little way along, where four low walls,
Heapt rudely from the ruins round, enclosed
A narrow space: and there upon the ground
Four bodies, decently composed, were laid,
Though horrid all with wounds and clotted gore;
A venerable ancient, by his side
A comely matron, for whose middle age,
(If ruthless slaughter had not intervened,)
Nature it seem'd, and gentle Time, might well
Have many a calm declining year in store;
The third an armëd warrior, on his breast
An infant, over whom his arms were cross'd.
There, . . with firm eye and steady countenance
Unfaltering, she addrest him, . . there they lie,
Child, Husband, Parents, . . Adosinda's all!
I could not break the earth with these poor hands,
Nor other tomb provide, . . but let that pass!
Auria itself is now but one wide tomb
For all its habitants:—What better grave?
What worthier monument? . . Oh cover not
Their blood, thou Earth! and ye, ye blessëd Souls
Of Heroes and of murder'd Innocents,
Oh never let your everlasting cries
Cease round the Eternal Throne, till the Most High
For all these unexampled wrongs hath given
Full, . . over-flowing vengeance!
While she spake
She raised her lofty hands to Heaven, as if
Calling for justice on the Judgement-seat;
Then laid them on her eyes, and leaning on
Bent o'er the open sepulchre.
But soon
With quiet mien collectedly, like one
Who from intense devotion, and the act
Of ardent prayer, arising, girds himself
For this world's daily business, . . she arose,
And said to Roderick, Help me now to raise
The covering of the tomb.

With half-burnt planks,
Which she had gather'd for this funeral use,
They roof'd the vault, then, laying stones above,
They closed it down; last, rendering all secure,
Stones upon stones they piled, till all appeared
A huge and shapeless heap. Enough, she cried;
And taking Roderick's hands in both her own,
And wringing them with fervent thankfulness,
May God shew mercy to thee, she exclaim'd,
When most thou needest mercy! Who thou art
I know not; not of Auria, . . for of all
Her sons and daughters, save the one who stands
Before thee, not a soul is left alive.
But thou hast render'd to me, in my hour
Of need, the only help which man could give.
What else of consolation may be found
For one so utterly bereft, from Heaven
And from myself must come. For deem not thou
That I shall sink beneath calamity:
This visitation, like a lightning-stroke,
Hath scathed the fruit and blossom of my youth;
One hour hath orphan'd me, and widow'd me,
And made me childless. In this sepulchre
Lie buried all my earthward hopes and fears,
All human loves and natural charities; . .
All womanly tenderness, all gentle thoughts,
All female weakness too, I bury here,
Yea, all my former nature. There remain
Revenge and death: . . the bitterness of death
Is past, and Heaven already hath vouchsafed
A foretaste of revenge.
Look here! she cried,
And drawing back, held forth her bloody hands, . .
'Tis Moorish! . . In the day of massacre,
A captain of Alcahman's murderous host
Reserved me from the slaughter. Not because
My rank and station tempted him with thoughts
Of ransom, for amid the general waste
Of ruin all was lost; . . Nor yet, be sure,
That pity moved him, . . they who from this race
Accurst for pity look, such pity find
As ravenous wolves show the defenceless flock.
My husband at my feet had fallen; my babe, . .
Spare me that thought, O God! . . and then . . even then
Amid the maddening throes of agony
Which rent my soul, . . when if this solid Earth
Had open'd and let out the central fire
Before whose all-involving flames wide Heaven
Shall shrivel like a scroll and be consumed,
The universal wreck had been to me
Relief and comfort; . . even then this Moor
Turn'd on me his libidinous eyes, and bade
His men reserve me safely for an hour
Of dalliance, . . me! . . me in my agonies!
But when I found for what this miscreant child

Of Hell had snatch'd me from the butchery,
The very horror of that monstrous thought
Saved me from madness; I was calm at once, . .
Yea comforted and reconciled to life:
Hatred became to me the life of life,
Its purpose and its power.
The glutted Moors
At length broke up. This hell-dog turn'd aside
Toward his home; we travell'd fast and far,
Till by a forest edge at eve he pitched
His tents. I wash'd and ate at his command,
Forcing revolted nature; I composed
My garments and bound up my scatter'd hair;
And when he took my hand, and to his couch
Would fain have drawn me, gently I retired
From that abominable touch, and said,
Forbear to-night I pray thee, for this day
A widow, as thou seest me, am I made;
Therefore, according to our law, must watch
And pray to-night. The loathsome villain paused
Ere he assented, then laid down to rest;
While at the door of the pavilion, I
Knelt on the ground, and bowed my face to earth;
But when the neighbouring tents had ceased their stir,
The fires were out, and all were fast asleep,
Then I arose. The blessed Moon from Heaven
Lent me her holy light. I did not pray
For strength, for strength was given me as I drew
The scymitar, and standing o'er his couch,
Raised it in both my hands with steady aim
And smote his neck. Upward, as from a spring
When newly open'd by the husbandman,
The villain's life-blood spouted. Twice I struck,
So making vengeance sure; then, praising God,
Retired amid the wood, and measured back
My patient way to Auria, to perform
This duty which thou seest.
As thus she spake,
Roderick intently listening had forgot
His crown, his kingdom, his calamities,
His crimes, . . so like a spell upon the Goth
Her powerful words prevail'd. With open lips,
And eager ear, and eyes which, while they watch'd
Her features, caught the spirit that she breathed,
Mute and enrapt he stood, and motionless;
The vision rose before him; and that shout,
Which, like a thunder-peal, victorious Spain
Sent through the welkin, rung within his soul
Its deep prophetic echoes. On his brow
The pride and power of former majesty
Dawn'd once again, but changed and purified:
Duty and high heroic purposes
Now hallow'd it, and as with inward light
Illumed his meagre countenance austere.

Awhile in silence Adosinda stood,
Reading his alter'd visage and the thoughts

Which thus transfigured him. Ay, she exclaim'd,
My tale hath moved thee! it might move the dead,
Quicken captivity's dead soul, and rouse
This prostrate country from her mortal trance:
Therefore I live to tell it; and for this
Hath the Lord God Almighty given to me
A spirit not mine own and strength from Heaven;
Dealing with me as in the days of old
With that Bethulian Matron when she saved
His people from the spoiler. What remains
But that the life which he hath thus preserved
I consecrate to him? Not veil'd and vow'd
To pass my days in holiness and peace;
Nor yet between sepulchral walls immured,
Alive to penitence alone; my rule
He hath himself prescribed, and hath infused
A passion in this woman's breast, wherein
All passions and all virtues are combined;
Love, hatred, joy, and anguish, and despair,
And hope, and natural piety, and faith,
Make up the mighty feeling. Call it not
Revenge! thus sanctified and thus sublimed,
'Tis duty, 'tis devotion. Like the grace
Of God, it came and saved me; and in it
Spain must have her salvation. In thy hands
Here, on the grave of all my family,
I make my vow.

She said, and kneeling down,
Placed within Roderick's palms her folded hands.
This life, she cried, I dedicate to God,
Therewith to do him service in the way
Which he hath shown. To rouse the land against
This impious, this intolerable yoke, . .
To offer up the invader's hateful blood, . .
This shall be my employ, my rule and rite,
Observances and sacrifice of faith;
For this I hold the life which he hath given,
A sacred trust; for this, when it shall suit
His service, joyfully will lay it down.
So deal with me as I fulfil the pledge,
O Lord my God, my Saviour and my Judge.

Then rising from the earth, she spread her arms,
And looking round with sweeping eyes exclaim'd,
Auria, and Spain, and Heaven receive the vow!

IV. THE MONASTERY OF ST. FELIX

Thus long had Roderick heard her powerful words
In silence, awed before her: but his heart
Was fill'd the while with swelling sympathy,
And now with impulse not to be restrain'd
The feeling overpower'd him. Hear me too,
Auria, and Spain, and Heaven! he cried; and thou

Who risest thus above mortality,
Sufferer and patriot, saint and heroine,
The servant and the chosen of the Lord,
For surely such thou art, . . receive in me
The first-fruits of thy calling. Kneeling then,
And placing as he spake his hand in hers,
As thou hast sworn, the royal Goth pursued,
Even so I swear; my soul hath found at length
Her rest and refuge; in the invader's blood
She must efface her stains of mortal sin,
And in redeeming this lost land, work out
Redemption for herself. Herein I place
My penance for the past, my hope to come,
My faith and my good works; here offer up
All thoughts and passions of mine inmost heart,
My days and night, . . this flesh, this blood, this life,
Yea this whole being, do I here devote
For Spain. Receive the vow, all Saints in Heaven,
And prosper its good end! . . Clap now your wings,
The Goth with louder utterance as he rose
Exclaim'd, . . clap now your wings exultingly,
Ye ravenous fowl of Heaven; and in your dens
Set up, ye wolves of Spain, a yell of joy;
For, lo! a nation hath this day been sworn
To furnish forth your banquet; for a strife
Hath been commenced, the which from this day forth
Permits no breathing-time, and knows no end
Till in this land the last invader bow
His neck beneath the exterminating sword.

Said I not rightly? Adosinda cried;
The will which goads me on is not mine own,
'Tis from on high, . . yea, verily of Heaven!
But who art thou who hast profess'd with me,
My first sworn brother in the appointed rule?
Tell me thy name.
Ask any thing but that!
The fallen King replied. My name was lost
When from the Goths the sceptre pass'd away.
The nation will arise regenerate;
Strong in her second youth and beautiful,
And like a spirit which hath shaken off
The clog of dull mortality, shall Spain
Arise in glory. But for my good name
No resurrection is appointed here.
Let it be blotted out on earth: in Heaven
There shall be written with it penitence,
And grace, and saving faith, and such good deeds
Wrought in atonement, as my soul this day
Hath sworn to offer up.
Then be thy name,
She answer'd, Maccabee, from this day forth:
For this day art thou born again; and like
Those brethren of old times, whose holy names
Live in the memory of all noble hearts
For love and admiration, ever young, . .
So for our native country, for her hearths

And altars, for her cradles and her graves,
Hast thou thyself devoted. Let us now
Each to our work. Among the neighbouring hills,
I to the vassals of my father's house;
Thou to Visonia. Tell the Abbot there
What thou hast seen at Auria; and with him
Take counsel who of all our Baronage
Is worthiest to lead on the sons of Spain,
And wear upon his brow the Spanish crown.
Now, brother, fare thee well! we part in hope,
And we shall meet again, be sure, in joy.

So saying, Adosinda left the King
Alone amid the ruins. There he stood,
As when Elisha, on the farther bank
Of Jordan, saw that elder prophet mount
The fiery chariot, and the steeds of fire,
Trampling the whirlwind, bear him up the sky:
Thus gazing after her did Roderick stand;
And as the immortal Tishbite left behind
His mantle and prophetic power, even so
Had her inspiring presence left infused
The spirit which she breathed. Gazing he stood,
As at a heavenly visitation there
Vouchsafed in mercy to himself and Spain;
And when the heroic mourner from his sight
Had pass'd away, still reverential awe
Held him suspended there and motionless.
Then turning from the ghastly scene of death
Up murmuring Lona, he began toward
The holy Bierzo his obedient way.
Sil's ample stream he crost, where through the vale
Of Orras, from that sacred land it bears
The whole collected waters; northward then,
Skirting the heights of Aguiar, he reach'd
That consecrated pile amid the wild,
Which sainted Fructuoso in his zeal
Rear'd to St. Felix, on Visonia's banks.

In commune with a priest of age mature,
Whose thoughtful visage and majestic mien
Bespake authority and weight of care,
Odoar, the venerable Abbot, sate,
When ushering Roderick in, the Porter said,
A stranger came from Auria, and required
His private ear. From Auria? said the old man,
Comest thou from Auria, brother? I can spare
Thy painful errand then, . . we know the worst.

Nay, answer'd Roderick, but thou hast not heard
My tale. Where that devoted city lies
In ashes, 'mid the ruins and the dead
I found a woman, whom the Moors had borne
Captive away; but she, by Heaven inspired
And her good heart, with her own arm had wrought
Her own deliverance, smiting in his tent
A lustful Moorish miscreant, as of yore
By Judith's holy deed the Assyrian fell.
And that same spirit which had strengthen'd her
Work'd in her still. Four walls with patient toil

She rear'd, wherein, as in a sepulchre,
With her own hands she laid her murder'd babe,
Her husband and her parents, side by side;
And when we cover'd in this shapeless tomb,
There on the grave of all her family,
Did this courageous mourner dedicate
All thoughts and actions of her future life
To her poor country. For she said, that Heaven
Supporting her, in mercy had vouchsafed
A foretaste of revenge; that, like the grace
Of God, revenge had saved her; that in it
Spain must have her salvation; and henceforth
That passion, thus sublimed and sanctified,
Must be to all the loyal sons of Spain
The pole-star of their faith, their rule and rite,
Observances and worthiest sacrifice.
I took the vow, unworthy as I am,
Her first sworn follower in the appointed rule;
And then we parted; she among the hills
To rouse the vassals of her father's house:
I at her bidding hitherward, to ask
Thy counsel, who of our old Baronage
Shall place upon his brow the Spanish crown.

The Lady Adosinda? Odoar cried.
Roderick made answer, So she call'd herself.

Oh, none but she! exclaim'd the good old man,
Clasping his hands, which trembled as he spake
In act of pious passion raised to Heaven, . .
Oh, none but Adosinda! . . none but she, . .
None but that noble heart, which was the heart
Of Auria while it stood, its life and strength,
More than her father's presence, or the arm
Of her brave husband, valiant as he was.
Hers was the spirit which inspired old age,
Ambitious boyhood, girls in timid youth,
And virgins in the beauty of their spring,
And youthful mothers, doting like herself
With ever-anxious love: She breathed through all
That zeal and that devoted faithfulness,
Which to the invader's threats and promises
Turn'd a deaf ear alike; which in the head
And flood of prosperous fortune check'd his course,
Repell'd him from the walls, and when at length
His overpowering numbers forced their way,
Even in that uttermost extremity
Unyielding, still from street to street, from house
To house, from floor to floor, maintain'd the fight:
Till by their altars falling, in their doors,
And on their household hearths, and by their beds
And cradles, and their fathers' sepulchres,
This noble army, gloriously revenged,
Embraced their martyrdom. Heroic souls!
Well have ye done, and righteously discharged

Your arduous part! Your service is perform'd,
Your earthly warfare done! Ye have put on
The purple robe of everlasting peace!
Ye have received your crown! Ye bear the palm
Before the throne of Grace!
With that he paused,
Checking the strong emotions of his soul.
Then with a solemn tone addressing him
Who shared his secret thoughts, thou knowest, he said,
O Urban, that they have not fallen in vain;
For by this virtuous sacrifice they thinn'd
Alcahman's thousands; and his broken force,
Exhausted by their dear-bought victory,
Turn'd back from Auria, leaving us to breathe
Among our mountains yet. We lack not here
Good hearts, nor valiant hands. What walls or towers
Or battlements are like these fastnesses,
These rocks and glens and everlasting hills?
Give but that Aurian spirit, and the Moors
Will spend their force as idly on these holds,
As round the rocky girdle of the land
The wild Cantabrian billows waste their rage.
Give but that spirit! . . Heaven hath given it us,
If Adosinda thus, as from the dead,
Be granted to our prayers!
And who art thou,
Said Urban, who hast taken on thyself
This rule of warlike faith? Thy countenance
And those poor weeds bespeak a life ere this
Devoted to austere observances.

Roderick replied, I am a sinful man,
One who in solitude hath long deplored
A life mis-spent; but never bound by vows,
Till Adosinda taught me where to find
Comfort, and how to work forgiveness out.
When that exalted woman took my vow,
She call'd me Maccabee; from this day forth
Be that my earthly name. But tell me now,
Whom shall we rouse to take upon his head
The crown of Spain? Where are the Gothic Chiefs?
Sacaru, Theudemir, Athanagild,
All who survived that eight days' obstinate fight,
When clogg'd with bodies Chrysus scarce could force
Its bloody stream along? Witiza's sons,
Bad offspring of a stock accurst, I know,
Have put the turban on their recreant heads.
Where are your own Cantabrian Lords? I ween,
Eudon, and Pedro, and Pelayo now
Have ceased their rivalry. If Pelayo live,
His were the worthy heart and rightful hand
To wield the sceptre and the sword of Spain.

Odoar and Urban eyed him while he spake,
As if they wonder'd whose the tongue might be
Familiar thus with Chiefs and thoughts of state.

They scann'd his countenance, but not a trace
Betray'd the Royal Goth: sunk was that eye
Of sovereignty, and on the emaciate cheek
Had penitence and anguish deeply drawn
Their furrows premature, . . forestalling time,
And shedding upon thirty's brow more snows
Than threescore winters in their natural course
Might else have sprinkled there. It seems indeed
That thou hast pass'd thy days in solitude,
Replied the Abbot, or thou would'st not ask
Of things so long gone by. Athanagild
And Theudemir have taken on their necks
The yoke. Sacaru play'd a nobler part.
Long within Merida did he withstand
The invader's hot assault; and when at length,
Hopeless of all relief, he yielded up
The gates, disdaining in his father's land
To breathe the air of bondage, with a few
Found faithful till the last, indignantly
Did he toward the ocean bend his way,
And shaking from his feet the dust of Spain,
Took ship, and hoisted sail through seas unknown
To seek for freedom. Our Cantabrian Chiefs
All have submitted, but the wary Moor
Trusteth not all alike: At his own Court
He holds Pelayo, as suspecting most
That calm and manly spirit; Pedro's son
There too is held as hostage, and secures
His father's faith; Count Eudon is despised,
And so lives unmolested. When he pays
His tribute, an uncomfortable thought
May then perhaps disturb him: . . or more like
He meditates how profitable 'twere
To be a Moor; and if apostacy
Were all, and to be unbaptized might serve, . .
But I waste breath upon a wretch like this;
Pelayo is the only hope of Spain,
Only Pelayo.
If, as we believe,
Said Urban then, the hand of Heaven is here,
And dreadful though they be, yet for wise end
Of good, these visitations do its work;
And dimly as our mortal sight may scan
The future, yet methinks my soul descries
How in Pelayo should the purposes
Of Heaven be best accomplished. All too long,
Here in their own inheritance, the sons
Of Spain have groan'd beneath a foreign yoke.
Punic and Roman, Kelt, and Goth, and Greek:
This latter tempest comes to sweep away
All proud distinctions which commingling blood
And time's long course have fail'd to efface; and now
Perchance it is the will of Fate to rear
Upon the soil of Spain a Spanish throne,
Restoring in Pelayo's native line
The sceptre to the Spaniard.
Go thou, then,
And seek Pelayo at the Conqueror's court.

Tell him the mountaineers are unsubdued;
The precious time they needed hath been gain'd
By Auria's sacrifice, and all they ask
Is him to guide them on. In Odoar's name
And Urban's, tell him that the hour is come.

Then pausing for a moment, he pursued,
The rule which thou hast taken on thyself
Toledo ratifies: 'tis meet for Spain,
And as the will divine, to be received,
Observed, and spread abroad. Come hither thou,
Who for thyself hast chosen the good part;
Let me lay hands on thee, and consecrate
Thy life unto the Lord.
Me! Roderick cried;
Me! sinner that I am! . . and while he spake
His wither'd cheek grew paler, and his limbs
Shook. As thou goest among the infidels,
Pursued the Primate, many thou wilt find
Fallen from the faith; by weakness some betray'd,
Some led astray by baser hope of gain,
And haply too by ill example led
Of those in whom they trusted. Yet have these
Their lonely hours, when sorrow, or the touch
Of sickness, and that aweful power divine
Which hath its dwelling in the heart of man,
Life of his soul, his monitor and judge,
Move them with silent impulse; but they look
For help, and finding none to succour them,
The irrevocable moment passeth by.
Therefore, my brother, in the name of Christ
Thus I lay hands on thee, that in His name
Thou with His gracious promises may'st raise
The fallen, and comfort those that are in need,
And bring salvation to the penitent.
Now, brother, go thy way: the peace of God
Be with thee, and his blessing prosper us!

V. RODERICK AND SIVERIAN

Between St. Felix and the regal seat
Of Abdalazis, ancient Cordoba,
Lay many a long day's journey interposed;
And many a mountain range hath Roderick crost,
And many a lovely vale, ere he beheld
Where Betis, winding through the unbounded plain,
Roll'd his majestic waters. There at eve,
Entering an inn, he took his humble seat
With other travellers round the crackling hearth,
Where heath and cistus gave their flagrant flame.
That flame no longer, as in other times,
Lit up the countenance of easy mirth
And light discourse: the talk which now went round
Was of the grief that press'd on every heart;
Of Spain subdued; the sceptre of the Goths
Broken; their nation and their name effaced;

Slaughter and mourning, which had left no house
Unvisited; and shame, which set its mark
On every Spaniard's face. One who had seen
His sons fall bravely at his side, bewail'd
The unhappy chance which, rescuing him from death,
Left him the last of all his family;
Yet he rejoiced to think that none who drew
Their blood from him remain'd to wear the yoke,
Be at the miscreant's beck, and propagate
A breed of slaves to serve them. Here sate one
Who told of fair possessions lost, and babes
To goodly fortunes born, of all bereft.
Another for a virgin daughter mourn'd,
The lewd barbarian's spoil. A fourth had seen
His only child forsake him in his age,
And for a Moor renounce her hope in Christ.
His was the heaviest grief of all, he said;
And clenching as he spake his hoary locks,
He cursed King Roderick's soul.
Oh curse him not!
Roderick exclaim'd, all shuddering as he spake.
Oh, for the love of Jesus, curse him not!
Sufficient is the dreadful load of guilt
That lies upon his miserable soul!
O brother, do not curse that sinful soul,
Which Jesus suffer'd on the cross to save!

But then an old man, who had sate thus long
A silent listener, from his seat arose,
And moving round to Roderick took his hand;
Christ bless thee, brother, for that Christian speech,
He said; and shame on me that any tongue
Readier than mine was found to utter it!
His own emotion fill'd him while he spake,
So that he did not feel how Roderick's hand
Shook like a palsied limb; and none could see
How, at his well-known voice, the countenance
Of that poor traveller suddenly was changed,
And sunk with deadlier paleness; for the flame
Was spent, and from behind him, on the wall
High hung, the lamp with feeble glimmering play'd.

Oh it is ever thus! the old man pursued,
The crimes and woes of universal Spain
Are charged on him; and curses which should aim
At living heads, pursue beyond the grave
His poor unhappy soul! As if his sin
Had wrought the fall of our old monarchy!
As if the Musselmen in their career
Would ne'er have overleapt the gulph which parts
Iberia from the Mauritanian shore,
If Julian had not beckon'd them! . . Alas!
The evils which drew on our overthrow,
Would soon by other means have wrought their end,
Though Julian's daughter should have lived and died
A virgin vow'd and veil'd.

Touch not on that,
Shrinking with inward shiverings at the thought,
The penitent exclaim'd. Oh, if thou lovest
The soul of Roderick, touch not on that deed!
God in his mercy may forgive it him,
But human tongue must never speak his name
Without reproach and utter infamy,
For that abhorred act. Even thou . . But here
Siverian taking up the word, brake off
Unwittingly the incautious speech. Even I,
Quoth he, who nursed him in his father's hall, . .
Even I can only for that deed of shame
Offer in agony my secret prayers.
But Spain hath witness'd other crimes as foul:
Have we not seen Favila's shameless wife,
Throned in Witiza's ivory car, parade
Our towns with regal pageantry, and bid
The murderous tyrant in her husband's blood
Dip his adulterous hand? Did we not see
Pelayo, by that bloody king's pursuit,
And that unnatural mother, from the land
With open outcry, like an outlaw'd thief,
Hunted? And saw ye not, Theodofred,
As through the streets I guided his dark steps,
Roll mournfully toward the noon-day sun
His blank and senseless eye-balls? Spain saw this,
And suffer'd it! . . I seek not to excuse
The sin of Roderick. Jesu, who beholds
The burning tears I shed in solitude,
Knows how I plead for him in midnight prayer.
But if, when he victoriously revenged
The wrongs of Chindasuintho's house, his sword
Had not for mercy turn'd aside its edge,
Oh what a day of glory had there been
Upon the banks of Chrysus! Curse not him,
Who in that fatal conflict to the last
So valiantly maintain'd his country's cause;
But if your sorrow needs must have its vent
In curses, let your imprecations strike
The caitiffs, who, when Roderick's horned helm
Rose eminent amid the thickest fight,
Betraying him who spared and trusted them,
Forsook their King, their Country, and their God,
And gave the Moor his conquest.
Ay! they said,
These were Witiza's hateful progeny;
And in an evil hour the unhappy King
Had spared the viperous brood. With that they talk'd
How Sisibert and Ebba through the land
Guided the foe: and Orpas, who had cast
The mitre from his renegado brow,
Went with the armies of the infidels;
And how in Hispalis, even where his hands
Had minister'd so oft the bread of life,
The circumcised apostate did not shame
To shew in open day his turban'd head.
The Queen too, Egilona, one exclaim'd;
Was she not married to the enemy,
The Moor, the Misbeliever? What a heart
Were hers, that she could pride and plume herself
To rank among his herd of concubines,

Having been what she had been! And who could say
How far domestic wrongs and discontent
Had wrought upon the King! . . Hereat the old man,
Raising beneath the knit and curly brow
His mournful eyes, replied, This I can tell,
That that unquiet spirit and unblest,
Though Roderick never told his sorrows, drove
Rusilla from the palace of her son.
She could not bear to see his generous mind
Wither beneath the unwholesome influence,
And cankering at the core. And I know well,
That oft when she deplored his barren bed,
The thought of Egilona's qualities
Came like a bitter medicine for her grief,
And to the extinction of her husband's line,
Sad consolation, reconciled her heart.

But Roderick, while they communed thus, had ceased
To hear, such painfulest anxiety
The sight of that old venerable man
Awoke. A sickening fear came over him:
The hope which led him from his hermitage
Now seem'd for ever gone, for well he knew
Nothing but death could break the ties which bound
That faithful servant to his father's house.
She then for whose forgiveness he had yearn'd,
Who in her blessing would have given and found
The peace of Heaven, . . she then was to the grave
Gone down disconsolate at last; in this
Of all the woes of her unhappy life
Unhappiest, that she did not live to see
God had vouchsafed repentance to her child.
But then a hope arose that yet she lived;
The weighty cause which led Siverian here
Might draw him from her side; better to know
The worst than fear it. And with that he bent
Over the embers, and with head half raised
Aslant, and shadow'd by his hand, he said,
Where is King Roderick's mother? lives she still?

God hath upheld her, the old man replied;
She bears this last and heaviest of her griefs,
Not as she bore her husband's wrongs, when hope
And her indignant heart supported her;
But patiently, like one who finds from Heaven
A comfort which the world can neither give
Nor take away. . . Roderick inquired no more;
He breathed a silent prayer in gratitude,
Then wrapt his cloak around him, and lay down
Where he might weep unseen.
When morning came,
Earliest of all the travellers he went forth,
And linger'd for Siverian by the way,
Beside a fountain, where the constant fall
Of water its perpetual gurgling made,

To the wayfaring or the musing man
Sweetest of all sweet sounds. The Christian hand,
Whose general charity for man and beast
Built it in better times, had with a cross
Of well-hewn stone crested the pious work,
Which now the misbelievers had cast down,
And broken in the dust it lay defiled.
Roderick beheld it lying at his feet,
And gathering reverently the fragments up,
Placed them within the cistern, and restored
With careful collocation its dear form, . .
So might the waters, like a crystal shrine,
Preserve it from pollution. Kneeling then,
O'er the memorial of redeeming love
He bent, and mingled with the fount his tears,
And pour'd his spirit to the Crucified.

A Moor came by, and seeing him, exclaim'd,
Ah, Kaffer! worshipper of wood and stone,
God's curse confound thee! And as Roderick turn'd
His face, the miscreant spurn'd him with his foot
Between the eyes. The indignant King arose,
And fell'd him to the ground. But then the Moor
Drew forth his dagger, rising as he cried,
What, darëst thou, thou infidel and slave,
Strike a believer? and he aim'd a blow
At Roderick's breast. But Roderick caught his arm,
And closed, and wrench'd the dagger from his hold, . .
Such timely strength did those emaciate limbs
From indignation draw, . . and in his neck
With mortal stroke he drove the avenging steel
Hilt deep. Then, as the thirsty sand drank in
The expiring miscreant's blood, he look'd around
In sudden apprehension, lest the Moors
Had seen them; but Siverian was in sight,
The only traveller, and he smote his mule
And hasten'd up. Ah, brother! said the old man,
Thine is a spirit of the ancient mould!
And would to God a thousand men like thee
Had fought at Roderick's side on that last day
When treason overpower'd him! Now, alas!
A manly Gothic heart doth ill accord
With these unhappy times. Come, let us hide
This carrion, while the favouring hour permits.

So saying he alighted. Soon they scoop'd
Amid loose-lying sand a hasty grave,
And levell'd over it the easy soil.
Father, said Roderick, as they journey'd on,
Let this thing be a seal and sacrament
Of truth between us: Wherefore should there be
Concealment between two right Gothic hearts
In evil days like ours? What thou hast seen
Is but the first fruit of the sacrifice,
Which on this injured and polluted soil,

As on a bloody altar, I have sworn
To offer to insulted Heaven for Spain,
Her vengeance and her expiation. This
Was but a hasty act, by sudden wrong
Provoked: but I am bound for Cordoba,
On weighty mission from Visonia sent,
To breathe into Pelayo's ear a voice
Of spirit-stirring power, which, like the trump
Of the Arch-angel, shall awake dead Spain.
The northern mountaineers are unsubdued;
They call upon Pelayo for their chief;
Odoar and Urban tell him that the hour
Is come. Thou too, I ween, old man, art charged
With no light errand, or thou wouldst not now
Have left the ruins of thy master's house.

Who art thou? cried Siverian, as he search'd
The wan and wither'd features of the King.
The face is of a stranger, but thy voice
Disturbs me like a dream.
Roderick replied,
Thou seest me as I am, . . a stranger; one
Whose fortunes in the general wreck were lost,
His name and lineage utterly extinct,
Himself in mercy spared, surviving all; . .
In mercy, that the bitter cup might heal
A soul diseased. Now, having cast the slough
Of old offences, thou beholdest me
A man new born; in second baptism named,
Like those who in Judea bravely raised
Against the Heathen's impious tyranny
The banner of Jehovah, Maccabee;
So call me. In that name hath Urban laid
His consecrating hands upon my head;
And in that name have I myself for Spain
Devoted. Tell me now why thou art sent
To Cordoba; for sure thou goëst not
An idle gazer to the Conqueror's court.

Thou judgest well, the old man replied. I too
Seek the Cantabrian Prince, the hope of Spain,
With other tidings charged, for other end
Design'd, yet such as well may work with thine.
My noble Mistress sends me to avert
The shame that threats his house. The renegade
Numacian, he who for the infidels
Oppresses Gegio, insolently woos
His sister. Moulded in a wicked womb,
The unworthy Guisla hath inherited
Her Mother's leprous taint; and willingly
She to the circumcised and upstart slave,
Disdaining all admonishment, gives ear.
The Lady Gaudiosa sees in this,
With the quick foresight of maternal care,
The impending danger to her husband's house,
Knowing his generous spirit ne'er will brook
The base alliance. Guisla lewdly sets
His will at nought; but that vile renegade,
From hatred, and from avarice, and from fear,
Will seek the extinction of Pelayo's line.
This too my venerable Mistress sees;
Wherefore these valiant and high-minded dames
Send me to Cordoba; that if the Prince
Cannot by timely interdiction stop

The irrevocable act of infamy,
He may at least to his own safety look,
Being timely warn'd.
Thy Mistress sojourns then
With Gaudiosa, in Pelayo's hall ?
Said Roderick. 'Tis her natural home, rejoin'd
Siverian : Chindasuintho's royal race
Have ever shared one lot of weal or woe :
And she who hath beheld her own fair shoot,
The goodly summit of that ancient tree,
Struck by Heaven's bolt, seeks shelter now beneath
The only branch of its majestic stem
That still survives the storm.
Thus they pursued
Their journey, each from other gathering store
For thought, with many a silent interval
Of mournful meditation, till they saw
The temples and the towers of Cordoba
Shining majestic in the light of eve.
Before them Betis roll'd his glittering stream,
In many a silvery winding traced afar
Amid the ample plain. Behind the walls
And stately piles which crown'd its margin, rich
With olives, and with sunny slope of vines,
And many a lovely hamlet interspersed,
Whose citron bowers were once the abode of peace,
Height above height, receding hills were seen
Imbued with evening hues ; and over all
The summits of the dark sierra rose,
Lifting their heads amid the silent sky.
The traveller who with a heart at ease
Had seen the goodly vision, would have loved
To linger, seeking with insatiate sight
To treasure up its image, deep impress'd,
A joy for years to come. O Cordoba,
Exclaim'd the old man, how princely are thy towers,
How fair thy vales, thy hills how beautiful !
The sun who sheds on thee his parting smiles
Sees not in all his wide career a scene
Lovelier, nor more exuberantly blest
By bounteous earth and heaven. The very gales
Of Eden waft not from the immortal bowers
Odours to sense more exquisite, than these
Which, breathing from thy groves and gardens, now
Recall in me such thoughts of bitterness.
The time has been when happy was their lot
Who had their birthright here ; but happy now
Are they who to thy bosom are gone home,
Because they feel not in their graves the feet
That trample upon Spain. 'Tis well that age
Hath made me like a child, that I can weep :
My heart would else have broken, overcharged,
And I, false servant, should lie down to rest
Before my work is done.
Hard by their path,
A little way without the walls, there stood
An edifice, whereto, as by a spell,
Siverian's heart was drawn. Brother, quoth he,
'Tis like the urgency of our return
Will brook of no retardment ; and this spot
It were a sin if I should pass, and leave

Unvisited. Beseech you turn with me,
The while I offer up one duteous prayer.

Roderick made no reply. He had not dared
To turn his face toward those walls; but now
He follow'd where the old man led the way.
Lord! in his heart the silent sufferer said,
Forgive my feeble soul, which would have shrunk
From this, . . for what am I that I should put
The bitter cup aside! O let my shame
And anguish be accepted in thy sight!

VI. RODERICK IN TIMES PAST

THE mansion whitherward they went, was one
Which in his youth Theodofred had built:
Thither had he brought home in happy hour
His blooming bride; there fondled on his knee
The lovely boy she bore him. Close beside,
A temple to that Saint he rear'd, who first,
As old tradition tells, proclaim'd to Spain
The gospel-tidings; and in health and youth,
There mindful of mortality, he saw
His sepulchre prepared. Witiza took
For his adulterous leman and himself
The stately pile: but to that sepulchre,
When from captivity and darkness death
Enlarged him, was Theodofred consign'd;
For that unhappy woman, wasting then
Beneath a mortal malady, at heart
Was smitten, and the Tyrant at her prayer
This poor and tardy restitution made.
Soon the repentant sinner follow'd him;
And calling on Pelayo ere she died,
For his own wrongs, and for his father's death,
Implored forgiveness of her absent child, . .
If it were possible he could forgive
Crimes black as hers, she said. And by the pangs
Of her remorse, . . by her last agonies, . .
The unutterable horrors of her death, . .
And by the blood of Jesus on the cross
For sinners given, did she beseech his prayers
In aid of her most miserable soul.
Thus mingling sudden shrieks with hopeless vows,
And uttering frantickly Pelayo's name,
And crying out for mercy in despair,
Here had she made her dreadful end, and here
Her wretched body was deposited.
That presence seem'd to desecrate the place:
Thenceforth the usurper shunn'd it with the heart
Of conscious guilt; nor could Rusilla bear
These groves and bowers, which, like funereal shades,
Oppress'd her with their monumental forms:
One day of bitter and severe delight,
When Roderick came for vengeance, she endured,
And then for ever left her bridal halls.

Oh when I last beheld yon princely pile,
Exclaim'd Siverian, with what other thoughts

Full, and elate of spirit, did I pass
Its joyous gates! The weedery which through
The interstices of those neglected courts
Uncheck'd had flourish'd long, and seeded there,
Was trampled then and bruised beneath the feet
Of thronging crowds. Here drawn in fair array,
The faithful vassals of my master's house,
Their javelins sparkling to the morning sun,
Spread their triumphant banners; high-plumed helms
Rose o'er the martial ranks, and prancing steeds
Made answer to the trumpet's stirring voice;
While yonder towers shook the dull silence off
Which long to their deserted walls had clung,
And with redoubling echoes swell'd the shout
That hail'd victorious Roderick. Louder rose
The acclamation, when the dust was seen
Rising beneath his chariot-wheels far off;
But nearer as the youthful hero came,
All sounds of all the multitude were hush'd,
And from the thousands and ten thousands here,
Whom Cordoba and Hispalis sent forth, . .
Yea whom all Baetica, all Spain pour'd out
To greet his triumph, . . not a whisper rose
To Heaven, such awe and reverence master'd them,
Such expectation held them motionless.
Conqueror and King he came; but with no joy
Of conquest, and no pride of sovereignty
That day display'd; for at his father's grave
Did Roderick come to offer up his vow
Of vengeance well perform'd. Three coal-black steeds
Drew on his ivory chariot: by his side,
Still wrapt in mourning for the long-deceased,
Rusilla sate; a deeper paleness blanch'd
Her faded countenance, but in her eye
The light of her majestic nature shone.
Bound, and expecting at their hands the death
So well deserved, Witiza follow'd them;
Aghast and trembling, first he gazed around,
Wildly from side to side; then from the face
Of universal execration shrunk,
Hanging his wretched head abased; and poor
Of spirit, with unmanly tears deplored
His fortune, not his crimes. With bolder front,
Confiding in his priestly character,
Came Orpas next; and then the spurious race
Whom in unhappy hour Favila's wife
Brought forth for Spain. O mercy ill bestow'd,
When Roderick, in compassion for their youth,
And for Pelayo's sake, forbore to crush
The brood of vipers!
Err perchance he might,
Replied the Goth, suppressing as he spake
All outward signs of pain, though every word
Went like a dagger to his bleeding heart; . .
But sure, I ween, that error is not placed

Among his sins. Old man, thou mayest regret
The mercy ill deserved, and worse return'd,
But not for this wouldst thou reproach the King!

Reproach him! cried Siverian; . . I reproach
My child, . . my noble boy, . . whom every tongue
Bless'd at that hour, . . whose love fill'd every heart
With joy, and every eye with joyful tears!
My brave, my beautiful, my generous boy!
Brave, beautiful, and generous as he was,
Never so brave, so beautiful, so great
As then, . . not even on that glorious day,
When on the field of victory, elevate
Amid the thousands who acclaim'd him King,
Firm on the shield above their heads upraised,
Erect he stood, and waved his bloody sword. . .
Why dost thou shake thy head as if in doubt?
I do not dream, nor fable! Ten short years
Have scarcely pass'd away, since all within
The Pyrenean hills, and the three seas
Which girdle Spain, echoed in one response
The acclamation from that field of fight. . .
Or doth aught ail thee, that thy body quakes
And shudders thus?
'Tis but a chill, replied
The King, in passing from the open air
Under the shadow of this thick-set grove.
Oh! if this scene awoke in thee such thoughts
As swell my bosom here, the old man pursued,
Sunshine, or shade, and all things from without,
Would be alike indifferent. Gracious God,
Only but ten short years, . . and all so changed!
Ten little years since in yon court he check'd
His fiery steeds. The steeds obey'd his hand,
The whirling wheels stood still, and when he leapt
Upon the pavement, the whole people heard,
In their deep silence, open-ear'd, the sound.
With slower movement from the ivory seat
Rusilla rose, her arm, as down she stept,
Extended to her son's supporting hand;
Not for default of firm or agile strength,
But that the feeling of that solemn hour
Subdued her then, and tears bedimm'd her sight.
Howbeit when to her husband's grave she came,
On the sepulchral stone she bow'd her head
Awhile; then rose collectedly, and fix'd
Upon the scene her calm and steady eye.
Roderick, . . oh when did valour wear a form
So beautiful, so noble, so august?
Or vengeance, when did it put on before
A character so aweful, so divine?
Roderick stood up, and reaching to the tomb
His hands, my hero cried, Theodofred!
Father! I stand before thee once again,
According to thy prayer, when kneeling down

Between thy knees I took my last farewell;
And vow'd by all thy sufferings, all thy wrongs,
And by my mother's days and nights of woe,
Her silent anguish, and the grief which then
Even from thee she did not seek to hide,
That if our cruel parting should avail
To save me from the Tyrant's jealous guilt,
Surely should my avenging sword fulfil
Whate'er he omen'd. Oh that time, I cried,
Would give the strength of manhood to this arm,
Already would it find a manly heart
To guide it to its purpose! And I swore
Never again to see my father's face,
Nor ask my mother's blessing, till I brought,
Dead or in chains, the Tyrant to thy feet.
Boy as I was, before all Saints in Heaven,
And highest God, whose justice slumbereth not,
I made the vow. According to thy prayer,
In all things, O my father, is that vow
Perform'd, alas too well! for thou didst pray,
While looking up I felt the burning tears
Which from thy sightless sockets stream'd, drop down, . .
That to thy grave, and not thy living feet,
The oppressor might be led. Behold him there, . .
Father! Theodofred! no longer now
In darkness, from thy heavenly seat look down,
And see before thy grave thine enemy
In bonds, awaiting judgement at my hand!
Thus while the hero spake, Witiza stood
Listening in agony, with open mouth,
And head half-raised, toward his sentence turn'd;
His eye-lids stiffen'd and pursed up, . . his eyes
Rigid, and wild, and wide; and when the King
Had ceased, amid the silence which ensued,
The dastard's chains were heard, link against link
Clinking. At length upon his knees he fell,
And lifting up his trembling hands, outstretch'd
In supplication, . . Mercy! he exclaim'd, . .
Chains, dungeons, darkness, . . any thing but death! . .
I did not touch his life.
Roderick replied,
His hour, whenever it had come, had found
A soul prepared: he lived in peace with Heaven,
And life prolong'd for him, was bliss delay'd.
But life, in pain and darkness and despair,
For thee, all leprous as thou art with crimes,
Is mercy... Take him hence, and let him see
The light of day no more!
Such Roderick was
When last I saw these courts, . . his theatre
Of glory; . . such when last I visited
My master's grave! Ten years have hardly held
Their course, . . ten little years . . break, break, old heart . .
Oh, why art thou so tough!

As thus he spake
They reach'd the church. The door before his hand
Gave way; both blinded with their tears, they went
Straight to the tomb; and there Siverian knelt,
And bow'd his face upon the sepulchre,
Weeping aloud; while Roderick, overpower'd,
And calling upon earth to cover him,
Threw himself prostrate on his father's grave.

Thus as they lay, an aweful voice in tones
Severe address'd them. Who are ye, it said,
That with your passion thus, and on this night,
Disturb my prayers? Starting they rose; there stood
A man before them of majestic form
And stature, clad in sackcloth, bare of foot,
Pale, and in tears, with ashes on his head.

VII. RODERICK AND PELAYO

'Twas not in vain that on her absent son,
Pelayo's mother from the bed of death
Call'd for forgiveness, and in agony
Besought his prayers; all guilty as she was,
Sure he had not been human, if that cry
Had fail'd to pierce him. When he heard the tale
He bless'd the messenger, even while his speech
Was faltering, . . while from head to foot he shook
With icy feelings from his inmost heart
Effused. It changed the nature of his woe,
Making the burthen more endurable:
The life-long sorrow that remain'd, became
A healing and a chastening grief, and brought
His soul, in close communion, nearer Heaven.
For he had been her first-born, and the love
Which at her breast he drew, and from her smiles,
And from her voice of tenderness imbibed,
Gave such unnatural horror to her crimes,
That when the thought came over him, it seem'd
As if the milk which with his infant life
Had blended, thrill'd like poison through his frame.
It was a woe beyond all reach of hope,
Till with the dreadful tale of her remorse
Faith touch'd his heart; and ever from that day
Did he for her who bore him, night and morn,
Pour out the anguish of his soul in prayer:
But chiefly as the night return'd, which heard
Her last expiring groans of penitence,
Then through the long and painful hours, before
The altar, like a penitent himself,
He kept his vigils; and when Roderick's sword
Subdued Witiza, and the land was free,
Duly upon her grave he offer'd up
His yearly sacrifice of agony
And prayer. This was the night, and he it was
Who now before Siverian and the King
Stood up in sackcloth.

The old man, from fear
Recovering and from wonder, knew him first.
It is the Prince! he cried, and bending down
Embraced his knees. The action and the word
Awaken'd Roderick; he shook off the load
Of struggling thoughts, which pressing on his heart,
Held him like one entranced; yet, all untaught
To bend before the face of man, confused
Awhile he stood, forgetful of his part.
But when Siverian cried, My Lord, my Lord,
Now God be praised that I have found thee thus,
My Lord and Prince, Spain's only hope and mine!
Then Roderick, echoing him, exclaim'd, My Lord
And Prince, Pelayo!.. and approaching near,
He bent his knee obeisant: but his head
Earthward inclined; while the old man, looking up
From his low gesture to Pelayo's face,
Wept at beholding him for grief and joy.

Siverian! cried the chief,.. of whom hath Death
Bereaved me, that thou comest to Cordoba?..
Children, or wife?.. Or hath the merciless scythe
Of this abhorr'd and jealous tyranny
Made my house desolate at one wide sweep?

They are as thou couldst wish, the old man replied,
Wert thou but lord of thine own house again,
And Spain were Spain once more. A tale of ill
I bear, but one that touches not the heart
Like what thy fears forbode. The renegade
Numacian woos thy sister, and she lends
To the vile slave, unworthily, her ear:
The Lady Gaudiosa hath in vain
Warn'd her of all the evils which await
A union thus accurst: she sets at nought
Her faith, her lineage, and thy certain wrath.

Pelayo hearing him, remain'd awhile
Silent; then turning to his mother's grave,..
O thou poor dust, hath then the infectious taint
Survived thy dread remorse, that it should run
In Guisla's veins? he cried;.. I should have heard
This shameful sorrow any where but here!..
Humble thyself, proud heart; thou, gracious Heaven,
Be merciful!.. it is the original flaw,..
And what are we?.. a weak unhappy race,
Born to our sad inheritance of sin
And death!.. He smote his forehead as he spake,
And from his head the ashes fell, like snow
Shaken from some dry beech-leaves, when a bird
Lights on the bending spray. A little while
In silence, rather than in thought, he stood
Passive beneath the sorrow: turning then,
And what doth Gaudiosa counsel me?

He ask'd the old man; for she hath ever been
My wise and faithful counsellor. . . He replied,
The Lady Gaudiosa bade me say
She sees the danger which on every part
Besets her husband's house . . Here she had ceased;
But when my noble Mistress gave in charge,
How I should tell thee that in evil times
The bravest counsels ever are the best;
Then that high-minded Lady thus rejoin'd,
Whatever be my Lord's resolve, he knows
I bear a mind prepared.
Brave spirits! cried
Pelayo, worthy to remove all stain
Of weakness from their sex! I should be less
Than man, if, drawing strength where others find
Their hearts most open to assault of fear,
I quail'd at danger. Never be it said
Of Spain, that in the hour of her distress
Her women were as heroes, but her men
Perform'd the woman's part.
Roderick at that
Look'd up, and taking up the word, exclaim'd,
O Prince, in better days the pride of Spain,
And prostrate as she lies, her surest hope,
Hear now my tale. The fire which seem'd extinct
Hath risen revigorate: a living spark
From Auria's ashes, by a woman's hand
Preserved and quicken'd, kindles far and wide
The beacon-flame o'er all the Asturian hills.
There hath a vow been offer'd up, which binds
Us and our children's children to the work
Of holy hatred. In the name of Spain
That vow hath been pronounced and register'd
Above, to be the bond whereby we stand
For condemnation or acceptance. Heaven
Received the irrevocable vow, and Earth
Must witness its fulfilment, Earth and Heaven
Call upon thee, Pelayo! Upon thee
The spirits of thy royal ancestors
Look down expectant; unto thee, from fields
Laid waste, and hamlets burnt, and cities sack'd,
The blood of infancy and helpless age
Cries out; thy native mountains call for thee,
Echoing from all their armëd sons thy name.
And deem not thou that hot impatience goads
Thy countrymen to counsels immature.
Odoar and Urban from Visonia's banks
Send me, their sworn and trusted messenger,
To summon thee, and tell thee in their name
That now the hour is come: For sure it seems,
Thus saith the Primate, Heaven's high will to rear
Upon the soil of Spain a Spanish throne,
Restoring in thy native line, O Prince,
The sceptre to the Spaniard. Worthy son
Of that most ancient and heroic race,
Which with unwearable endurance still
Hath striven against its mightier enemies,
Roman or Carthaginian, Greek or Goth;
So often by superior arms oppress'd,

More often by superior arts beguiled;
Yet amid all its sufferings, all the waste
Of sword and fire remorselessly employ'd,
Unconquer'd and unconquerable still; . .
Son of that injured and illustrious stock,
Stand forward thou, draw forth the sword of Spain,
Restore them to their rights, too long withheld,
And place upon thy brow the Spanish crown.

When Roderick ceased, the princely Mountaineer
Gazed on the passionate orator awhile,
With eyes intently fix'd, and thoughtful brow;
Then turning to the altar, he let fall
The sackcloth robe, which late with folded arms
Against his heart was prest; and stretching forth
His hands toward the crucifix, exclaim'd,
My God and my Redeemer! where but here,
Before thy aweful presence, in this garb,
With penitential ashes thus bestrewn,
Could I so fitly answer to the call
Of Spain; and for her sake, and in thy name,
Accept the Crown of Thorns she proffers me!

And where but here, said Roderick in his heart,
Could I so properly, with humbled knee
And willing soul, confirm my forfeiture? . .
The action follow'd on that secret thought:
He knelt, and took Pelayo's hand, and cried,
First of the Spaniards, let me with this kiss
Do homage to thee here, my Lord and King! . .
With voice unchanged and steady countenance
He spake; but when Siverian follow'd him,
The old man trembled as his lips pronounced
The faltering vow; and rising he exclaim'd,
God grant thee, O my Prince, a better fate
Than thy poor kinsman's, who in happier days
Received thy homage here! Grief choak'd his speech,
And, bursting into tears, he sobb'd aloud.
Tears too adown Pelayo's manly cheek
Roll'd silently. Roderick alone appear'd
Unmoved and calm; for now the royal Goth
Had offer'd his accepted sacrifice,
And therefore in his soul he felt that peace
Which follows painful duty well perform'd, . .
Perfect and heavenly peace, . . the peace of God.

VIII. ALPHONSO

Fain would Pelayo have that hour obey'd
The call, commencing his adventurous flight,
As one whose soul impatiently endured
His country's thraldom, and in daily prayer
Imploring her deliverance, cried to Heaven,
How long, O Lord, how long! . . But other thoughts
Curbing his spirit, made him yet awhile

Sustain the weight of bondage. Him alone,
Of all the Gothic baronage, the Moors
Watch'd with regard of wary policy, . .
Knowing his powerful name, his noble mind,
And how in him the old Iberian blood,
Of royal and remotest ancestry,
From undisputed source flow'd undefiled;
His mother's after-guilt attainting not
The claim legitimate he derived from her,
Her first-born in her time of innocence.
He too of Chindasuintho's regal line
Sole remnant now, drew after him the love
Of all true Goths, uniting in himself
Thus by this double right, the general heart
Of Spain. For this the renegado crew,
Wretches in whom their conscious guilt and fear
Engender'd cruellest hatred, still advised
The extinction of Pelayo's house; but most
The apostate Prelate, in iniquity
Witiza's genuine brother as in blood,
Orpas, pursued his life. He never ceased
With busy zeal, true traitor, to infuse
His deadly rancour in the Moorish chief;
Their only danger, ever he observed,
Was from Pelayo; root his lineage out,
The Caliph's empire then would be secure,
And universal Spain, all hope of change
Being lost, receive the Prophet's conquering law.
Then did the Arch-villain urge the Moor at once
To cut off future peril, telling him
Death was a trusty keeper, and that none
E'er broke the prison of the grave. But here
Keen malice overshot its mark: the Moor,
Who from the plunder of their native land
Had bought the recreant crew that join'd his arms,
Or cheaplier with their own possessions bribed
Their sordid souls, saw through the flimsy show
Of policy wherewith they sought to cloak
Old enmity, and selfish aims: he scorn'd
To let their private purposes incline
His counsels, and believing Spain subdued,
Smiled, in the pride of power and victory,
Disdainful at the thought of farther strife.
Howbeit he held Pelayo at his court,
And told him that until his countrymen
Submissively should lay their weapons down,
He from his children and paternal hearth
Apart must dwell; nor hope to see again
His native mountains and their vales beloved,
Till all the Asturian and Cantabrian hills
Had bow'd before the Caliph; Cordoba
Must be his nightly prison till that hour.
This night, by special favour from the Moor
Ask'd and vouchsafed, he pass'd without the walls,
Keeping his yearly vigil; on this night
Therefore the princely Spaniard could not fly,
Being thus in strongest bonds by honour held;
Nor would he by his own escape expose
To stricter bondage, or belike to death,

Count Pedro's son. The ancient enmity
Of rival houses from Pelayo's heart
Had, like a thing forgotten, pass'd away;
He pitied child and parent, separated
By the stern mandate of unfeeling power,
And almost with a father's eyes beheld
The boy, his fellow in captivity.
For young Alphonso was in truth an heir
Of nature's largest patrimony; rich
In form and feature, growing strength of limb,
A gentle heart, a soul affectionate,
A joyous spirit fill'd with generous thoughts,
And genius heightening and ennobling all;
The blossom of all manly virtues made
His boyhood beautiful. Shield, gracious Heaven,
In this ungenial season perilous, . .
Thus would Pelayo sometimes breathe in prayer
The aspirations of prophetic hope, . .
Shield, gracious Heaven, the blooming tree! and let
This goodly promise, for thy people's sake,
Yield its abundant fruitage.
When the Prince,
With hope and fear and grief and shame disturb'd,
And sad remembrance, and the shadowy light
Of days before him, thronging as in dreams,
Whose quick succession fill'd and overpower'd
Awhile the unresisting faculty,
Could in the calm of troubled thoughts subdued
Seek in his heart for counsel, his first care
Was for the boy; how best they might evade
The Moor, and renegade's more watchful eye;
And leaving in some unsuspicious guise
The city, through what unfrequented track
Safeliest pursue with speed their dangerous way.
Consumed in cares like these, the fleeting hours
Went by. The lamps and tapers now grew pale,
And through the eastern window slanting fell
The roseate ray of morn. Within those walls
Returning day restored no cheerful sounds
Or joyous motions of awakening life;
But in the stream of light the speckled motes,
As if in mimickry of insect play,
Floated with mazy movement. Sloping down
Over the altar pass'd the pillar'd beam,
And rested on the sinful woman's grave
As if it enter'd there, a light from Heaven.
So be it! cried Pelayo, even so!
As in a momentary interval,
When thought expelling thought, had left his mind
Open and passive to the influxes
Of outward sense, his vacant eye was there, . .
So be it, Heavenly Father, even so!
Thus may thy vivifying goodness shed
Forgiveness there; for let not thou the groans
Of dying penitence, nor my bitter prayers
Before thy mercy-seat, be heard in vain!
And thou, poor soul, who from the dolorous house
Of weeping and of pain, dost look to me
To shorten and assuage thy penal term,

Pardon me that these hours in other thoughts
And other duties than this garb, this night
Enjoin, should thus have pass'd! Our mother-land
Exacted of my heart the sacrifice;
And many a vigil must thy son perform
Henceforth in woods and mountain fastnesses,
And tented fields, outwatching for her sake
The starry host, and ready for the work
Of day, before the sun begins his course.

The noble Mountaineer, concluding then
With silent prayer the service of the night,
Went forth. Without the porch awaiting him
He saw Alphonso, pacing to and fro
With patient step and eye reverted oft.
He, springing forward when he heard the door
Move on its heavy hinges, ran to him,
And welcomed him with smiles of youthful love.
I have been watching yonder moon, quoth he,
How it grew pale and paler as the sun
Scatter'd the flying shades; but woe is me,
For on the towers of Cordoba the while
That baleful crescent glitter'd in the morn,
And with its insolent triumph seem'd to mock
The omen I had found. . . Last night I dreamt
That thou wert in the field in arms for Spain,
And I was at thy side: the infidels
Beset us round, but we with our good swords
Hew'd out a way. Methought I stabb'd a Moor
Who would have slain thee; but with that I woke
For joy, and wept to find it but a dream.

Thus as he spake a livelier glow o'erspread
His cheek, and starting tears again suffused
The brightening lustre of his eyes. The Prince
Regarded him a moment steadfastly,
As if in quick resolve; then looking round
On every side with keen and rapid glance,
Drew him within the church. Alphonso's heart
Throbb'd with a joyful boding as he mark'd
The calmness of Pelayo's countenance
Kindle with solemn thoughts, expressing now
High purposes of resolute hope. He gazed
All eagerly to hear what most he wish'd.
If, said the Prince, thy dream were verified,
And I indeed were in the field in arms
For Spain, . . wouldst thou be at Pelayo's side? . .
If I should break these bonds, and fly to rear
Our country's banner on our native hills,
Wouldst thou, Alphonso, share my dangerous flight,
Dear boy, . . and wilt thou take thy lot with me
For death, or for deliverance?
Shall I swear?
Replied the impatient boy; and laying hand
Upon the altar, on his knee he bent,
Looking towards Pelayo with such joy

Of reverential love, as if a God
Were present to receive the eager vow.
Nay, quoth Pelayo: what hast thou to do
With oaths? . . Bright emanation as thou art,
It were a wrong to thy unsullied soul,
A sin to nature, were I to require
Promise or vow from thee! Enough for me
That thy heart answers to the stirring call.
Alphonso, follow thou in happy faith
Alway the indwelling voice that counsels thee;
And then, let fall the issue as it may,
Shall all thy paths be in the light of Heaven,
The peace of Heaven be with thee in all hours.

How then, exclaim'd the boy, shall I discharge
The burthen of this happiness,.. how ease
My overflowing soul! . . Oh, gracious God,
Shall I behold my mother's face again,..
My father's hall, . . my native hills and vales,
And hear the voices of their streams again, . .
And free as I was born amid those scenes
Beloved, maintain my country's freedom there, . .
Or, failing in the sacred enterprise,
Die as becomes a Spaniard? . . Saying thus,
He lifted up his hands and eyes toward
The image of the Crucified, and cried,
O Thou who didst with thy most precious blood
Redeem us, Jesu! help us while we seek
Earthly redemption from this yoke of shame
And misbelief and death.
The noble boy
Then rose, and would have knelt again to clasp
Pelayo's knees, and kiss his hand in act
Of homage; but the Prince, preventing this,
Bent over him in fatherly embrace,
And breathed a fervent blessing on his head.

IX. FLORINDA

THERE sate a woman like a supplicant,
Muffled and cloak'd, before Pelayo's gate,
Awaiting when he should return that morn.
She rose at his approach, and bow'd her head,
And, with a low and trembling utterance,
Besought him to vouchsafe her speech within
In privacy. And when they were alone,
And the doors closed, she knelt and claspt his knees,
Saying, a boon! a boon! This night, O Prince,
Hast thou kept vigil for thy mother's soul:
For her soul's sake, and for the soul of him
Whom once, in happier days, of all mankind
Thou heldest for thy chosen bosom friend,
Oh for the sake of his poor suffering soul,
Refuse me not!
How should I dare refuse,
Being thus adjured? he answer'd. Thy request
Is granted, woman, . . be it what it may
So it be lawful, and within the bounds
Of possible achievement: . . aught unfit
Thou wouldst not with these adjurations seek.

But who thou art, I marvel, that dost touch
Upon that string, and ask in Roderick's name! . .
She bared her face, and, looking up, replied,
Florinda! . . Shrinking then, with both her hands
She hid herself, and bow'd her head abased
Upon her knee, . . as one who, if the grave
Had oped beneath her, would have thrown herself,
Even like a lover, in the arms of Death.

Pelayo stood confused: he had not seen
Count Julian's daughter since in Roderick's court,
Glittering in beauty and in innocence,
A radiant vision, in her joy she moved;
More like a poet's dream, or form divine,
Heaven's prototype of perfect womanhood,
So lovely was the presence, . . than a thing
Of earth and perishable elements.
Now had he seen her in her winding-sheet,
Less painful would that spectacle have proved;
For peace is with the dead, and piety
Bringeth a patient hope to those who mourn
O'er the departed; but this alter'd face,
Bearing its deadly sorrow character'd,
Came to him like a ghost, which in the grave
Could find no rest. He, taking her cold hand,
Raised her, and would have spoken; but his tongue
Fail'd in its office, and could only speak
In under tones compassionate her name.
The voice of pity soothed and melted her;
And when the Prince bade her be comforted,
Proffering his zealous aid in whatsoe'er
Might please her to appoint, a feeble smile
Pass'd slowly over her pale countenance,
Like moonlight on a marble statue. Heaven
Requite thee, Prince! she answer'd. All I ask
Is but a quiet resting-place, wherein
A broken heart, in prayer and humble hope,
May wait for its deliverance. Even this
My most unhappy fate denies me here.
Griefs which are known too widely and too well
I need not now remember. I could bear
Privation of all Christian ordinances,
The woe which kills hath saved me too, and made
A temple of this ruin'd tabernacle,
Wherein redeeming God doth not disdain
To let his presence shine. And I could bear
To see the turban on my father's brow, . .
Sorrow beyond all sorrows, . . shame of shames, . .
Yet to be borne, while I with tears of blood,
And throes of agony, in his behalf
Implore and wrestle with offended Heaven.
This I have borne resign'd: but other ills
And worse assail me now; the which to bear,
If to avoid be possible, would draw
Damnation down. Orpas, the perjured Priest,
The apostate Orpas, claims me for his bride.

Obdurate as he is, the wretch profanes
My sacred woe, and woos me to his bed,
The thing I am, . . the living death thou seest!

Miscreant! exclaim'd Pelayo. Might I meet
That renegado, sword to scymitar,
In open field, never did man approach
The altar for the sacrifice in faith
More sure, than I should hew the villain down!
But how should Julian favour his demand? . .
Julian, who hath so passionately loved
His child, so dreadfully revenged her wrongs!

Count Julian, she replied, hath none but me,
And it hath, therefore, been his heart's desire
To see his ancient line by me preserved.
This was their covenant when in fatal hour
For Spain, and for themselves, in traitorous bond
Of union they combined. My father, stung
To madness, only thought of how to make
His vengeance sure; the Prelate, calm and cool,
When he renounced his outward faith in Christ,
Indulged at once his hatred of the King,
His inbred wickedness, and a haughty hope,
Versed as he was in treasons, to direct
The invaders by his secret policy,
And at their head, aided by Julian's power,
Reign as a Moor upon that throne to which
The priestly order else had barr'd his way.
The African hath conquer'd for himself;
But Orpas coveteth Count Julian's lands,
And claims to have the covenant perform'd.
Friendless, and worse than fatherless, I come
To thee for succour. Send me secretly, . .
For well I know all faithful hearts must be
At thy devotion, . . with a trusty guide
To guard me on the way, that I may reach
Some Christian land, where Christian rites are free,
And there discharge a vow, alas! too long,
Too fatally delay'd. Aid me in this
For Roderick's sake, Pelayo! and thy name
Shall be remember'd in my latest prayer.

Be comforted! the Prince replied; but when
He spake of comfort, twice did he break off
The idle words, feeling that earth had none
For grief so irremediable as hers.
At length he took her hand, and pressing it,
And forcing through involuntary tears
A mournful smile affectionate, he said,
Say not that thou art friendless while I live!
Thou couldst not to a readier ear have told
Thy sorrows, nor have ask'd in fitter hour
What for my country's honour, for my rank,
My faith, and sacred knighthood, I am bound
In duty to perform; which not to do
Would show me undeserving of the names

Of Goth, Prince, Christian, even of Man.
This day,
Lady, prepare to take thy lot with me,
And soon as evening closes meet me here.
Duties bring blessings with them, and I hold
Thy coming for a happy augury,
In this most aweful crisis of my fate.

X. RODERICK AND FLORINDA

With sword and breast-plate, under rustic weeds
Conceal'd, at dusk Pelayo pass'd the gate,
Florinda following near, disguised alike.
Two peasants on their mules they seem'd, at eve
Returning from the town. Not distant far,
Alphonso by the appointed orange-grove,
With anxious eye and agitated heart,
Watch'd for the Prince's coming. Eagerly
At every foot-fall through the gloom he strain'd
His sight, nor did he recognize him when
The Chieftain thus accompanied drew nigh;
And when the expected signal called him on,
Doubting this female presence, half in fear
Obey'd the call. Pelayo too perceived
The boy was not alone; he not for that
Delay'd the summons, but lest need should be,
Laying hand upon his sword, toward him bent
In act soliciting speech, and low of voice
Enquired if friend or foe. Forgive me, cried
Alphonso, that I did not tell thee this,
Full as I was of happiness, before.
'Tis Hoya, servant of my father's house,
Unto whose dutiful care and love, when sent
To this vile bondage, I was given in charge.
How could I look upon my father's face
If I had in my joy deserted him,
Who was to me found faithful?.. Right! replied
The Prince; and viewing him with silent joy,
Blessed the Mother, in his heart he said,
Who gave thee birth! but sure of womankind
Most blessed she whose hand her happy stars
Shall link with thine! and with that thought the form
Of Hermesind, his daughter, to his soul
Came in her beauty.
Soon by devious tracks
They turn'd aside. The favouring moon arose,
To guide them on their flight through upland paths
Remote from frequentage, and dales retired,
Forest and mountain glen. Before their feet
The fire-flies, swarming in the woodland shade,
Sprung up like sparks, and twinkled round their way;
The timorous blackbird, starting at their step,
Fled from the thicket with shrill note of fear;
And far below them in the peopled dell,
When all the soothing sounds of eve had ceased,
The distant watch-dog's voice at times was heard,
Answering the nearer wolf. All through the night

Among the hills they travell'd silently;
Till when the stars were setting, at what hour
The breath of Heaven is coldest, they beheld
Within a lonely grove the expected fire,
Where Roderick and his comrade anxiously
Look'd for the appointed meeting. Halting there,
They from the burthen and the bit relieved
Their patient bearers, and around the fire
Partook of needful food and grateful rest.

Bright rose the flame replenish'd; it illumed
The cork-tree's furrow'd rind, its rifts and swells
And redder scars, . . and where its aged boughs
O'erbower'd the travellers, cast upon the leaves
A floating, grey, unrealizing gleam.
Alphonso, light of heart, upon the heath
Lay carelessly dispread, in happy dreams
Of home; his faithful Hoya slept beside.
Years and fatigue to old Siverian brought
Easy oblivion; and the Prince himself,
Yielding to weary nature's gentle will,
Forgot his cares awhile. Florinda sate
Beholding Roderick with fix'd eyes intent,
Yet unregardant of the countenance
Whereon they dwelt; in other thoughts absorb'd,
Collecting fortitude for what she yearn'd,
Yet trembled to perform. Her steady look
Disturb'd the Goth, albeit he little ween'd
What agony awaited him that hour.
Her face, well nigh as changed as his, was now
Half hidden, and the lustre of her eye
Extinct; nor did her voice awaken in him
One startling recollection when she spake,
So altered were its tones.
Father, she said,
All thankful as I am to leave behind
The unhappy walls of Cordoba, not less
Of consolation doth my heart receive
At sight of one to whom I may disclose
The sins which trouble me, and at his feet
Lay down repentantly, in Jesu's name,
The burthen of my spirit. In his name
Hear me, and pour into a wounded soul
The balm of pious counsel... Saying thus,
She drew toward the minister ordain'd,
And kneeling by him, Father, dost thou know
The wretch who kneels beside thee? she enquired.
He answered, Surely we are each to each
Equally unknown.
Then said she, Here thou seest
One who is known too fatally for all, . .
The daughter of Count Julian. . . Well it was
For Roderick that no eye beheld him now;
From head to foot a sharper pang than death
Thrill'd him; his heart, as at a mortal stroke,
Ceased from its functions: his breath fail'd, and when
The power of life recovering set its springs
Again in action, cold and clammy sweat
Starting at every pore suffused his frame.
Their presence help'd him to subdue himself;

For else, had none been nigh, he would have fallen
Before Florinda prostrate on the earth,
And in that mutual agony belike
Both souls had taken flight. She mark'd him not;
For having told her name, she bow'd her head,
Breathing a short and silent prayer to Heaven,
While, as a penitent, she wrought herself
To open to his eye her hidden wounds.

Father, at length she said, all tongues amid
This general ruin shed their bitterness
On Roderick, load his memory with reproach,
And with their curses persecute his soul. . .
Why shouldst thou tell me this? exclaim'd the Goth,
From his cold forehead wiping as he spake
The death-like moisture: . . Why of Roderick's guilt
Tell me? Or thinkest thou I know it not?
Alas! who hath not heard the hideous tale
Of Roderick's shame! Babes learn it from their nurses,
And children, by their mothers unreproved,
Link their first execrations to his name.
Oh, it hath caught a taint of infamy,
That, like Iscariot's, through all time shall last,
Reeking and fresh for ever!
There! she cried,
Drawing her body backward where she knelt,
And stretching forth her arms with head upraised, .
There! it pursues me still! . . I came to thee,
Father, for comfort, and thou heapest fire
Upon my head. But hear me patiently,
And let me undeceive thee; self-abased,
Not to arraign another, do I come; . .
I come a self-accuser, self-condemn'd
To take upon myself the pain deserved;
For I have drunk the cup of bitterness,
And having drunk therein of heavenly grace,
I must not put away the cup of shame.

Thus as she spake she falter'd at the close,
And in that dying fall her voice sent forth
Somewhat of its original sweetness.
Thou! . .
Thou self-abased! exclaim'd the astonish'd King; . .
Thou self-condemn'd! . . The cup of shame for thee!
Thee . . thee, Florinda! . . But the very excess
Of passion check'd his speech, restraining thus
From farther transport, which had haply else
Master'd him; and he sate like one entranced,
Gazing upon that countenance so fallen,
So changed: her face, raised from its muffler now,
Was turn'd toward him, and the firelight shone
Full on its mortal paleness; but the shade
Conceal'd the King.
She roused him from the spell
Which held him like a statue motionless.
Thou too, quoth she, dost join the general curse,
Like one who when he sees a felon's grave,
Casting a stone there as he passes by,
Adds to the heap of shame. Oh what are we,

Frail creatures as we are, that we should sit
In judgement man on man! and what were we,
If the All-merciful should mete to us
With the same rigorous measure wherewithal
Sinner to sinner metes! But God beholds
The secrets of the heart, . . therefore his name
Is Merciful. Servant of God, see thou
The hidden things of mine, and judge thou then
In charity thy brother who hath fallen. . .
Nay, hear me to the end! I loved the King, . .
Tenderly, passionately, madly loved him.
Sinful it was to love a child of earth
With such entire devotion as I loved
Roderick, the heroic Prince, the glorious Goth!
And yet methought this was its only crime,
The imaginative passion seem'd so pure:
Quiet and calm like duty, hope nor fear
Disturb'd the deep contentment of that love;
He was the sunshine of my soul, and like
A flower, I lived and flourish'd in his light.
Oh bear not with me thus impatiently!
No tale of weakness this, that in the act
Of penitence, indulgent to itself,
With garrulous palliation half repeats
The sin it ill repents. I will be brief,
And shrink not from confessing how the love
Which thus began in innocence, betray'd
My unsuspecting heart; nor me alone,
But him, before whom, shining as he shone
With whatsoe'er is noble, whatsoe'er
Is lovely, whatsoever good and great,
I was as dust and ashes, . . him, alas!
This glorious being, this exalted Prince,
Even him, with all his royalty of soul,
Did this ill-omen'd, this accursëd love,
To his most lamentable fall betray
And utter ruin. Thus it was: The King,
By counsels of cold statesmen ill-advised,
To an unworthy mate had bound himself
In politic wedlock. Wherefore should I tell
How Nature upon Egilona's form,
Profuse of beauty, lavishing her gifts,
Left, like a statue from the graver's hands,
Deformity and hollowness beneath
The rich external? For the love of pomp
And emptiest vanity, hath she not incurr'd
The grief and wonder of good men, the gibes
Of vulgar ribaldry, the reproach of all;
Profaning the most holy sacrament
Of marriage, to become chief of the wives
Of Abdalaziz, of the Infidel,
The Moor, the tyrant-enemy of Spain!
All know her now; but they alone who knew
What Roderick was can judge his wretchedness,
To that light spirit and unfeeling heart
In hopeless bondage bound. No children rose
From this unhappy union, towards whom
The springs of love within his soul confined
Might flow in joy and fulness; nor was he
One, like Witiza, of the vulgar crew,

Who in promiscuous appetite can find
All their vile nature seeks. Alas for man!
Exuberant health diseases him, frail worm!
And the slight bias of untoward chance
Makes his best virtue from the even line,
With fatal declination, swerve aside.
Ay, thou mayest groan for poor mortality, . .
Well, Father, mayest thou groan! My evil fate
Made me an inmate of the royal house,
And Roderick found in me, if not a heart
Like his, . . for who was like the heroic Goth? . .
One which at least felt his surpassing worth,
And loved him for himself. . . A little yet
Bear with me, reverend Father, for I touch
Upon the point, and this long prologue goes,
As justice bids, to palliate his offence,
Not mine. The passion, which I fondly thought
Such as fond sisters for a brother feel,
Grew day by day, and strengthen'd in its growth,
Till the beloved presence had become
Needful as food or necessary sleep,
My hope, light, sunshine, life, and every thing.
Thus lapt in dreams of bliss, I might have lived
Contented with this pure idolatry,
Had he been happy: but I saw and knew
The inward discontent and household griefs
Which he subdued in silence; and alas!
Pity with admiration mingling then,
Alloy'd and lower'd and humanized my love,
Till to the level of my lowliness
It brought him down; and in this treacherous heart
Too often the repining thought arose,
That if Florinda had been Roderick's Queen,
Then might domestic peace and happiness
Have bless'd his home and crown'd our wedded loves.
Too often did that sinful thought recur,
Too feebly the temptation was repell'd.

See, Father, I have probed my inmost soul;
Have search'd to its remotest source the sin;
And tracing it through all its specious forms
Of fair disguisement, I present it now,
Even as it lies before the eye of God,
Bare and exposed, convicted and condemn'd.
One eve, as in the bowers which overhang
The glen where Tagus rolls between his rocks
I roam'd alone, alone I met the King.
His countenance was troubled, and his speech
Like that of one whose tongue to light discourse
At fits constrain'd, betrays a heart disturb'd:
I too, albeit unconscious of his thoughts,
With anxious looks reveal'd what wandering words
In vain essay'd to hide. A little while
Did this oppressive intercourse endure,
Till our eyes met in silence, each to each
Telling their mutual tale, then consciously
Together fell abash'd. He took my hand
And said, Florinda, would that thou and I
Earlier had met! oh what a blissful lot

Had then been mine, who might have found in thee
The sweet companion and the friend endear'd,
A fruitful wife and crown of earthly joys!
Thou too shouldst then have been of womankind
Happiest, as now the loveliest. . . And with that,
First giving way to passion first disclosed,
He press'd upon my lips a guilty kiss, . .
Alas! more guiltily received than given.
Passive and yielding, and yet self-reproach'd,
Trembling I stood, upheld in his embrace;
When coming steps were heard, and Roderick said,
Meet me to-morrow, I beseech thee, here,
Queen of my heart! Oh meet me here again,
My own Florinda, meet me here again! . .
Tongue, eye, and pressure of the impassion'd hand
Solicited and urged the ardent suit,
And from my hesitating hurried lips
The word of promise fatally was drawn.
O Roderick, Roderick! hadst thou told me all
Thy purpose at that hour, from what a world
Of woe had thou and I. . . The bitterness
Of that reflection overcame her then,
And choak'd her speech. But Roderick sate the while
Covering his face with both his hands close-prest,
His head bow'd down, his spirit to such point
Of sufferance knit, as one who patiently
Awaits the uplifted sword.
Till now, said she,
Resuming her confession, I had lived,
If not in innocence, yet self-deceived,
And of my perilous and sinful state
Unconscious. But this fatal hour reveal'd
To my awakening soul her guilt and shame;
And in those agonies with which remorse,
Wrestling with weakness and with cherish'd sin,
Doth triumph o'er the lacerated heart,
That night . . that miserable night . . I vow'd,
A virgin dedicate, to pass my life
Immured; and, like redeemed Magdalen,
Or that Egyptian penitent[1], whose tears
Fretted the rock, and moisten'd round her cave
The thirsty desert, so to mourn my fall.
The struggle ending thus, the victory
Thus, as I thought, accomplish'd, I believed
My soul was calm, and that the peace of Heaven
Descended to accept and bless my vow;
And in this faith, prepared to consummate
The sacrifice, I went to meet the King.
See, Father, what a snare had Satan laid!
For Roderick came to tell me that the Church
From his unfruitful bed would set him free,
And I should be his Queen.
O let me close
The dreadful tale! I told him of my vow;
And from sincere and scrupulous piety,
But more, I fear me, in that desperate mood
Of obstinate will perverse, the which, with pride
And shame and self-reproach, doth sometimes make
A woman's tongue, her own worst enemy,

[1] St. Mary the Egyptian (S.).

Run counter to her dearest heart's desire, . .
In that unhappy mood did I resist
All his most earnest prayers to let the power
Of holy Church, never more rightfully
Invoked, he said, than now in our behalf,
Release us from our fatal bonds. He urged
With kindling warmth his suit, like one whose life
Hung on the issue; I dissembled not
My cruel self-reproaches, nor my grief,
Yet desperately maintain'd the rash resolve;
Till in the passionate argument he grew
Incensed, inflamed, and madden'd or possess'd, . .
For Hell too surely at that hour prevail'd,
And with such subtile toils envelop'd him,
That even in the extremity of guilt
No guilt he purported, but rather meant
An amplest recompence of life-long love
For transitory wrong, which fate perverse,
Thus madly he deceived himself, compell'd,
And therefore stern necessity excused.
Here then, O Father, at thy feet I own
Myself the guiltier; for full well I knew
These were his thoughts, but vengeance master'd me,
And in my agony I cursed the man
Whom I loved best.
Dost thou recall that curse?
Cried Roderick, in a deep and inward voice,
Still with his head depress'd, and covering still
His countenance. Recall it! she exclaim'd;
Father, I come to thee because I gave
The reins to wrath too long, . . because I wrought
His ruin, death, and infamy. . . O God,
Forgive the wicked vengeance thus indulged,
As I forgive the King! . . But teach me now
What reparation more than tears and prayers
May now be made; . . how shall I vindicate
His injured name, and take upon myself . . . .
Daughter of Julian, firmly he replied,
Speak not of that, I charge thee! On his fame
The Ethiop dye, fixed ineffaceably,
For ever will abide; so it must be,
So should be: 'tis his rightful punishment;
And if to the full measure of his sin
The punishment hath fallen, the more our hope
That through the blood of Jesus he may find
That sin forgiven him.
Pausing then, he raised
His hand, and pointed where Siverian lay
Stretch'd on the heath. To that old man, said he,
And to the mother of the unhappy Goth,
Tell, if it please thee, . . not what thou hast pour'd
Into my secret ear, but that the child
For whom they mourn with anguish unallay'd,
Sinn'd not from vicious will, or heart corrupt,
But fell by fatal circumstance betray'd.
And if in charity to them thou sayest
Something to palliate, something to excuse
An act of sudden frenzy when the Fiend
O'ercame him, thou wilt do for Roderick
All he could ask thee, all that can be done
On earth, and all his spirit could endure.

Venturing towards her an imploring look,
Wilt thou join with me for his soul in prayer ?
He said, and trembled as he spake. That voice
Of sympathy was like Heaven's influence,
Wounding at once and comforting the soul.
O Father, Christ requite thee ! she exclaim'd ;
Thou hast set free the springs which withering griefs
Have closed too long. Forgive me, for I thought
Thou wert a rigid and unpitying judge ;
One whose stern virtue, feeling in itself
No flaw of frailty, heard impatiently
Of weakness and of guilt. I wrong'd thee, Father ! . .
With that she took his hand, and kissing it,
Bathed it with tears. Then in a firmer speech,
For Roderick, for Count Julian and myself,
Three wretchedest of all the human race,
Who have destroyed each other and ourselves,
Mutually wrong'd and wronging, let us pray !

XI. COUNT PEDRO'S CASTLE

Twelve weary days with unremitting speed,
Shunning frequented tracks, the travellers
Pursued their way ; the mountain path they chose,
The forest or the lonely heath wide-spread,
Where cistus shrubs sole-seen exhaled at noon
Their fine balsamic odour all around ;
Strew'd with their blossoms, frail as beautiful,
The thirsty soil at eve ; and when the sun
Relumed the gladden'd earth, opening anew
Their stores exuberant, prodigal as frail,
Whiten'd again the wilderness. They left
The dark Sierra's skirts behind, and cross'd
The wilds where Ana in her native hills
Collects her sister springs, and hurries on
Her course melodious amid loveliest glens,
With forest and with fruitage over-bower'd.
These scenes profusely blest by Heaven they left,
Where o'er the hazel and the quince the vine
Wide-mantling spreads ; and clinging round the cork
And ilex, hangs amid their dusky leaves
Garlands of brightest hue, with reddening fruit
Pendant, or clusters cool of glassy green.
So holding on o'er mountain and o'er vale,
Tagus they cross'd where midland on his way
The King of Rivers rolls his stately stream ;
And rude Alverches wide and stony bed,
And Duero distant far, and many a stream
And many a field obscure, in future war
For bloody theatre of famous deeds
Foredoom'd ; and deserts where in years to come
Shall populous towns arise, and crested towers
And stately temples rear their heads on high.

Cautious with course circuitous they shunn'd
The embattled city, which in eldest time
Thrice-greatest Hermes built, so fables say,
Now subjugate, but fated to behold
Ere long the heroic Prince (who passing now
Unknown and silently the dangerous track,
Turns thither his regardant eye) come down
Victorious from the heights, and bear abroad
Her banner'd Lion, symbol to the Moor
Of rout and death through many an age of blood.
Lo, there the Asturian hills! Far in the west,
Huge Rabanal and Foncebadon huge,
Pre-eminent, their giant bulk display,
Darkening with earliest shade the distant vales
Of Leon, and with evening premature.
Far in Cantabria eastward, the long line
Extends beyond the reach of eagle's eye,
When buoyant in mid-heaven the bird of Jove
Soars at his loftiest pitch. In the north, before
The travellers the Erbasian mountains rise,
Bounding the land beloved, their native land.

How then, Alphonso, did thy eager soul
Chide the slow hours and painful way, which seem'd
Lengthening to grow before their lagging pace!
Youth of heroic thought and high desire,
'Tis not the spur of lofty enterprize
That with unequal throbbing hurries now
The unquiet heart, now makes it sink dismay'd;
'Tis not impatient joy which thus disturbs
In that young breast the healthful spring of life;
Joy and ambition have forsaken him,
His soul is sick with hope. So near his home,
So near his mother's arms; . . alas! perchance
The long'd-for meeting may be yet far off
As earth from heaven. Sorrow in these long months
Of separation may have laid her low;
Or what if at his flight the bloody Moor
Hath sent his ministers of slaughter forth,
And he himself should thus have brought the sword
Upon his father's head? . . Sure Hoya too
The same dark presage feels, the fearful boy
Said in himself; or wherefore is his brow
Thus overcast with heaviness, and why
Looks he thus anxiously in silence round?

Just then that faithful servant raised his hand,
And turning to Alphonso with a smile,
He pointed where Count Pedro's towers far off
Peer'd in the dell below; faint was the smile,
And while it sate upon his lips, his eye
Retain'd its troubled speculation still.
For long had he look'd wistfully in vain,
Seeking where far or near he might espy
From whom to learn if time or chance had wrought
Change in his master's house: but on the hills

Nor goat-herd could he see, nor traveller,
Nor huntsman early at his sports afield,
Nor angler following up the mountain glen
His lonely pastime; neither could he hear
Carol, or pipe, or shout of shepherd's boy,
Nor woodman's axe, for not a human sound
Disturb'd the silence of the solitude.

Is it the spoiler's work? At yonder door
Behold the favourite kidling bleats unheard;
The next stands open, and the sparrows there
Boldly pass in and out. Thither he turn'd
To seek what indications were within;
The chesnut-bread was on the shelf, the churn,
As if in haste forsaken, full and fresh;
The recent fire had moulder'd on the hearth;
And broken cobwebs mark'd the whiter space
Where from the wall the buckler and the sword
Had late been taken down. Wonder at first
Had mitigated fear, but Hoya now
Return'd to tell the symbols of good hope,
And they prick'd forward joyfully. Ere long,
Perceptible above the ceaseless sound
Of yonder stream, a voice of multitudes,
As if in loud acclaim, was heard far off;
And nearer as they drew, distincter shouts
Came from the dell, and at Count Pedro's gate
The human swarm were seen, . . a motley group,
Maids, mothers, helpless infancy, weak age,
And wondering children and tumultuous boys,
Hot youth and resolute manhood gather'd there,
In uproar all. Anon the moving mass
Falls in half circle back, a general cry
Bursts forth, exultant arms are lifted up,
And caps are thrown aloft, as through the gate
Count Pedro's banner came. Alphonso shriek'd
For joy, and smote his steed and gallop'd on.

Fronting the gate the standard-bearer holds
His precious charge. Behind the men divide
In order'd files; green boyhood presses there,
And waning eld, pleading a youthful soul,
Intreats admission. All is ardour here,
Hope and brave purposes and minds resolved.
Nor where the weaker sex is left apart
Doth aught of fear find utterance, though perchance
Some paler cheeks might there be seen, some eyes
Big with sad bodings, and some natural tears.
Count Pedro's war-horse in the vacant space
Strikes with impatient hoof the trodden turf,
And gazing round upon the martial show,
Proud of his stately trappings, flings his head,
And snorts and champs the bit, and neighing shrill
Wakes the near echo with his voice of joy.

The page beside him holds his master's spear
And shield and helmet. In the castle-gate
Count Pedro stands, his countenance resolved
But mournful, for Favinia on his arm
Hung, passionate with her fears, and held him back.
Go not, she cried, with this deluded crew!
She hath not, Pedro, with her frantic words
Bereft thy faculty, . . she is crazed with grief,
And her delirium hath infected these:
But, Pedro, thou art calm; thou dost not share
The madness of the crowd; thy sober mind
Surveys the danger in its whole extent,
And sees the certain ruin, . . for thou know'st
I know thou hast no hope. Unhappy man,
Why then for this most desperate enterprize
Wilt thou devote thy son, thine only child?
Not for myself I plead, nor even for thee;
Thou art a soldier, and thou canst not fear
The face of death; and I should welcome it
As the best visitant whom Heaven could send.
Not for our lives I speak then, . . were they worth
The thought of preservation; . . Nature soon
Must call for them; the sword that should cut short
Sorrow's slow work were merciful to us.
But spare Alphonso! there is time and hope
In store for him. O thou who gavest him life,
Seal not his death, his death and mine at once!

Peace! he replied: thou know'st there is no choice,
I did not raise the storm; I cannot turn
Its course aside! but where yon banner goes
Thy Lord must not be absent! Spare me then,
Favinia, lest I hear thy honour'd name
Now first attainted with deserved reproach.
The boy is in God's hands. He who of yore
Walk'd with the sons of Judah in the fire,
And from the lion's den drew Daniel forth
Unhurt, can save him, . . if it be his will.

Even as he spake, the astonish'd troop set up
A shout of joy which rung through all the hills.
Alphonso heeds not how they break their ranks
And gather round to greet him; from his horse
Precipitate and panting off he springs.
Pedro grew pale, and trembled at his sight;
Favinia claspt her hands, and looking up
To Heaven as she embraced the boy, exclaim'd,
Lord God, forgive me for my sinful fears;
Unworthy that I am, . . my son, my son!

XII. THE VOW

ALWAYS I knew thee for a generous foe,
Pelayo! said the Count; and in our time
Of enmity, thou too, I know, didst feel
The feud between us was but of the house,
Not of the heart. Brethren in arms henceforth
We stand or fall together: nor will I
Look to the event with one misgiving thought, . .
That were to prove myself unworthy now
Of Heaven's benignant providence, this hour,
Scarcely by less than miracle, vouchsafed.
I will believe that we have days in store
Of hope, now risen again as from the dead, . .
Of vengeance, . . of portentous victory, . .
Yea, maugre all unlikelihoods, . . of peace.
Let us then here indissolubly knit
Our ancient houses, that those happy days,
When they arrive, may find us more than friends,
And bound by closer than fraternal ties.
Thou hast a daughter, Prince, to whom my heart
Yearns now, as if in winning infancy
Her smiles had been its daily food of love.
I need not tell thee what Alphonso is, . .
Thou know'st the boy!
Already had that hope,
Replied Pelayo, risen within my soul.
O Thou, who in thy mercy from the house
Of Moorish bondage hast deliver'd us,
Fulfil the pious purposes for which
Here, in thy presence, thus we pledge our hands!
Strange hour to plight espousals! yielding half
To superstitious thoughts, Favinia cried,
And these strange witnesses! . . The times are strange,
With thoughtful speech composed her Lord replies,
And what thou seest accords with them. This day
Is wonderful; nor could auspicious Heaven
With fairer or with fitter omen gild
Our enterprize, when strong in heart and hope
We take the field, preparing thus for works
Of piety and love. Unwillingly
I yielded to my people's general voice,
Thinking that she who with her powerful words
To this excess had roused and kindled them,
Spake from the spirit of her griefs alone,
Not with prophetic impulse. Be that sin
Forgiven me! and the calm and quiet faith
Which, in the place of incredulity,
Hath fill'd me, now that seeing I believe,
Doth give of happy end to righteous cause
A presage, not presumptuous, but assured.

Then Pedro told Pelayo how from vale
To vale the exalted Adosinda went,
Exciting sire and son, in holy war
Conquering or dying, to secure their place
In Paradise: and how reluctantly,
And mourning for his child by his own act
Thus doom'd to death, he bade with heavy heart

His banner be brought forth. Devoid alike
Of purpose and of hope himself, he meant
To march toward the western Mountaineers,
Where Odoar by his counsel might direct
Their force conjoin'd. Now, said he, we must haste
To Cangas, there, Pelayo, to secure,
With timely speed, I trust in God, thy house.

Then looking to his men, he cried, Bring forth
The armour which in Wamba's wars I wore. . .
Alphonso's heart leapt at the auspicious words.
Count Pedro mark'd the rising glow of joy, . .
Doubly to thee, Alphonso, he pursued,
This day above all other days is blest,
From whence as from a birth-day thou wilt date
Thy life in arms!
Rejoicing in their task,
The servants of the house with emulous love
Dispute the charge. One brings the cuirass, one
The buckler; this exultingly displays
The sword, his comrade lifts the helm on high:
The greaves, the gauntlets they divide; a spur
Seems now to dignify the officious hand
Which for such service bears it to his Lord.
Greek artists in the imperial city forged
That splendid armour, perfect in their craft;
With curious skill they wrought it, framed alike
To shine amid the pageantry of war,
And for the proof of battle. Many a time
Alphonso from his nurse's lap had stretch'd
His infant hands toward it eagerly,
Where gleaming to the central fire it hung
High in the hall; and many a time had wish'd
With boyish ardour, that the day were come
When Pedro to his prayers would grant the boon,
His dearest heart's desire. Count Pedro then
Would smile, and in his heart rejoice to see
The noble instinct manifest itself.
Then too Favinia with maternal pride
Would turn her eyes exulting to her Lord,
And in that silent language bid him mark
His spirit in his boy; all danger then
Was distant, and if secret forethought faint
Of manhood's perils, and the chance of war,
Hateful to mothers, pass'd across her mind,
The ill remote gave to the present hour
A heighten'd feeling of secure delight.

No season this for old solemnities,
For wassailry and sport; . . the bath, the bed,
The vigil, . . all preparatory rites
Omitted now, . . here in the face of Heaven,
Before the vassals of his father's house,
With them in instant peril to partake
The chance of life or death, the heroic boy
Dons his first arms; the coated scales of steel

Which o'er the tunic to his knees depend,
The hose, the sleeves of mail; bare-headed then
He stood. But when Count Pedro took the spurs
And bent his knee in service to his son,
Alphonso from that gesture half drew back,
Starting in reverence, and a deeper hue
Spread o'er the glow of joy which flush'd his cheeks.
Do thou the rest, Pelayo! said the Count;
So shall the ceremony of this hour
Exceed in honour what in form it lacks.
The Prince from Hoya's faithful hand received
The sword; he girt it round the youth, and drew
And placed it in his hand; unsheathing then
His own good falchion, with its burnish'd blade
He touch'd Alphonso's neck, and with a kiss
Gave him his rank in arms.
Thus long the crowd
Had look'd intently on, in silence hush'd;
Loud and continuous now with one accord,
Shout following shout, their acclamations rose;
Blessings were breathed from every heart, and joy,
Powerful alike in all, which as with force
Of an inebriating cup inspired
The youthful, from the eye of age drew tears.
The uproar died away, when standing forth,
Roderick with lifted hand besought a pause
For speech, and moved towards the youth. I too,
Young Baron, he began, must do my part;
Not with prerogative of earthly power,
But as the servant of the living God,
The God of Hosts. This day thou promisest
To die when honour calls thee for thy faith,
For thy liege Lord, and for thy native land;
The duties which at birth we all contract,
Are by the high profession of this hour
Made thine especially. Thy noble blood,
The thoughts with which thy childhood hath been fed,
And thine own noble nature more than all,
Are sureties for thee. But these dreadful times
Demand a farther pledge; for it hath pleased
The Highest, as he tried his Saints of old,
So in the fiery furnace of his wrath
To prove and purify the sons of Spain;
And they must knit their spirits to the proof,
Or sink, for ever lost. Hold forth thy sword,
Young Baron, and before thy people take
The vow which, in Toledo's sacred name,
Poor as these weeds bespeak me, I am here
To minister with delegated power.

With reverential awe was Roderick heard
By all, so well authority became
That mien and voice and countenance austere.
Pelayo with complacent eye beheld
The unlook'd-for interposal, and the Count

Bends toward Alphonso his approving head.
The youth obedient loosen'd from his belt
The sword, and looking, while his heart beat fast,
To Roderick, reverently expectant stood.

O noble youth, the Royal Goth pursued,
Thy country is in bonds; an impious foe
Oppresses her; he brings with him strange laws,
Strange language, evil customs, and false faith,
And forces them on Spain. Swear that thy soul
Will make no covenant with these accursed,
But that the sword shall be from this day forth
Thy children's portion, to be handed down
From sire to son, a sacred heritage,
Through every generation, till the work
Be done, and this insulted land hath drunk
In sacrifice, the last invader's blood!

Bear witness, ancient Mountains! cried the youth,
And ye, my native Streams, who hold your course
For ever; . . this dear Earth, and yonder Sky,
Be witness! for myself I make the vow,
And for my children's children. Here I stand
Their sponsor, binding them in sight of Heaven,
As by a new baptismal sacrament,
To wage hereditary holy war,
Perpetual, patient, persevering war,
Till not one living enemy pollute
The sacred soil of Spain.

So as he ceased,
While yet toward the clear blue firmament
His eyes were raised, he lifted to his lips
The sword, with reverent gesture bending then
Devoutly kiss'd its cross.
And ye! exclaimed
Roderick, as turning to the assembled troop
He motion'd with authoritative hand, . .
Ye children of the hills and sons of Spain!

Through every heart the rapid feeling ran, . .
For us! they answer'd all with one accord,
And at the word they knelt: People and Prince,
The young and old, the father and the son,
At once they knelt; with one accord they cried,
For us, and for our seed! with one accord
They cross'd their fervent arms, and with bent head
Inclined toward that aweful voice from whence
The inspiring impulse came. The Royal Goth
Made answer, I receive your vow for Spain
And for the Lord of Hosts: your cause is good,
Go forward in his spirit and his strength.

Ne'er in his happiest hours had Roderick
With such commanding majesty dispensed
His princely gifts, as dignified him now,
When with slow movement, solemnly upraised,
Toward the kneeling troop he spread his arms,

As if the expanded soul diffused itself,
And carried to all spirits with the act
Its effluent inspiration. Silently
The people knelt, and when they rose, such awe
Held them in silence, that the eagle's cry,
Who far above them, at her highest flight
A speck scarce visible, gyred round and round,
Was heard distinctly; and the mountain stream,
Which from the distant glen sent forth its sounds
Wafted upon the wind, grew audible
In that deep hush of feeling, like the voice
Of waters in the stillness of the night.

XIII. COUNT EUDON

That aweful silence still endured, when one,
Who to the northern entrance of the vale
Had turn'd his casual eye, exclaim'd, The Moors! . .
For from the forest verge a troop were seen
Hastening toward Pedro's hall. Their forward speed
Was check'd when they beheld his banner spread,
And saw his order'd spears in prompt array
Marshall'd to meet their coming. But the pride
Of power and insolence of long command
Prick'd on their Chief presumptuous: We are come
Late for prevention, cried the haughty Moor,
But never time more fit for punishment!
These unbelieving slaves must feel and know
Their master's arm! . . On, faithful Musselmen,
On . . on, . . and hew down the rebellious dogs! . .
Then as he spurr'd his steed, Allah is great!
Mahommed is his Prophet! he exclaim'd,
And led the charge.
Count Pedro met the Chief
In full career; he bore him from his horse
A full spear's length upon the lance transfix'd;
Then leaving in his breast the mortal shaft,
Pass'd on, and breaking through the turban'd files
Open'd a path. Pelayo, who that day
Fought in the ranks afoot, for other war
Yet unequipp'd, pursued and smote the foe,
But ever on Alphonso at his side
Retain'd a watchful eye. The gallant boy
Gave his good sword that hour its earliest taste
Of Moorish blood, . . that sword whose hungry edge,
Through the fair course of all his glorious life
From that auspicious day, was fed so well.
Cheap was the victory now for Spain achieved;
For the first fervour of their zeal inspired
The Mountaineers, . . the presence of their Chiefs,
The sight of all dear objects, all dear ties,
The air they breathed, the soil whereon they trod,
Duty, devotion, faith, and hope and joy.
And little had the misbelievers ween'd

In such impetuous onset to receive
A greeting deadly as their own intent;
Victims they thought to find, not men prepared
And eager for the fight; their confidence
Therefore gave way to wonder, and dismay
Effected what astonishment began.
Scatter'd before the impetuous Mountaineers,
Buckler and spear and scymitar they dropt,
As in precipitate route they fled before
The Asturian sword: the vales and hills and rocks
Received their blood, and where they fell the wolves
At evening found them.
From the fight apart
Two Africans had stood, who held in charge
Count Eudon. When they saw their countrymen
Falter, give way, and fly before the foe,
One turn'd toward him with malignant rage,
And saying, Infidel! thou shalt not live
To join their triumph! aim'd against his neck
The moony falchion's point. His comrade raised
A hasty hand and turn'd its edge aside,
Yet so that o'er the shoulder glancing down
It scarr'd him as it pass'd. The murderous Moor,
Not tarrying to secure his vengeance, fled;
While he of milder mood, at Eudon's feet
Fell and embraced his knees. The mountaineer
Who found them thus, withheld at Eudon's voice
His wrathful hand, and led them to his Lord.

Count Pedro and Alphonso and the Prince
Stood on a little rocky eminence
Which overlook'd the vale. Pedro had put
His helmet off, and with sonorous horn
Blew the recall; for well he knew what thoughts,
Calm as the Prince appear'd and undisturb'd,
Lay underneath his silent fortitude;
And how at this eventful juncture speed
Imported more than vengeance. Thrice he sent
The long-resounding signal forth, which rung
From hill to hill, re-echoing far and wide.
Slow and unwillingly his men obey'd
The swelling horn's reiterated call;
Repining that a single foe escaped
The retribution of that righteous hour.
With lingering step reluctant from the chase
They turn'd, . . their veins full-swoln, their sinews strung
For battle still, their hearts unsatisfied;
Their swords were dropping still with Moorish blood,
And where they wiped their reeking brows, the stain
Of Moorish gore was left. But when they came
Where Pedro, with Alphonso at his side,
Stood to behold their coming, then they press'd
All emulous, with gratulation round,
Extolling for his deeds that day display'd
The noble boy. Oh! when had Heaven, they said,
With such especial favour manifest
Illustrated a first essay in arms!
They bless'd the father from whose loins he sprung,

The mother at whose happy breast he fed;
And pray'd that their young hero's fields might be
Many, and all like this.
Thus they indulged
The honest heart, exuberant of love,
When that loquacious joy at once was check'd,
For Eudon and the Moor were brought before
Count Pedro. Both came fearfully and pale,
But with a different fear: the African
Felt at this crisis of his destiny
Such apprehension as without reproach
Might blanch a soldier's cheek, when life and death
Hang on another's will, and helplessly
He must abide the issue. But the thoughts
Which quail'd Count Eudon's heart, and made his limbs
Quiver, were of his own unworthiness,
Old enmity, and that he stood in power
Of hated and hereditary foes.
I came not with them willingly! he cried,
Addressing Pedro and the Prince at once,
Rolling from each to each his restless eyes
Aghast, . . the Moor can tell I had no choice;
They forced me from my castle: . . in the fight
They would have slain me: . . . see I bleed! The Moor
Can witness that a Moorish scymitar
Inflicted this: . . he saved me from worse hurt: . .
I did not come in arms: . . he knows it all; . .
Speak, man, and let the truth be known to clear
My innocence!
Thus as he ceased, with fear
And rapid utterance panting open-mouth'd,
Count Pedro half represt a mournful smile,
Wherein compassion seem'd to mitigate
His deep contempt. Methinks, said he, the Moor
Might with more reason look himself to find
An intercessor, than be call'd upon
To play the pleader's part. Didst thou then save
The Baron from thy comrades?
Let my Lord
Show mercy to me, said the Mussulman,
As I am free from falsehood. We were left,
I and another, holding him in charge;
My fellow would have slain him when he saw
How the fight fared: I turn'd the scymitar
Aside, and trust that life will be the meed
For life by me preserved.
Nor shall thy trust,
Rejoin'd the Count, be vain. Say farther now,
From whence ye came? . . your orders what? . . what force
In Gegio? and if others like yourselves
Are in the field?
The African replied,
We came from Gegio, order'd to secure
This Baron on the way, and seek thee here
To bear thee hence in bonds. A messenger
From Cordoba, whose speed denoted well
He came with urgent tidings, was the cause
Of this our sudden movement. We went forth

Three hundred men; an equal force was sent
For Cangas, on like errand as I ween.
Four hundred in the city then were left.
If other force be moving from the south,
I know not, save that all appearances
Denote alarm and vigilance.
The Prince
Fix'd upon Eudon then his eye severe;
Baron, he said, the die of war is cast;
What part art thou prepared to take? against,
Or with the oppressor?
Not against my friends, . .
Not against you! . . the irresolute wretch replied,
Hasty, yet faltering in his fearful speech:
But . . have ye weigh'd it well? . . It is not yet
Too late, . . their numbers, . . their victorious force,
Which hath already trodden in the dust
The sceptre of the Goths: . . the throne destroy'd, . .
Our towns subdued, . . our country overrun, . .
The people to the yoke of their new Lords
Resign'd in peace. . . Can I not mediate? . .
Were it not better through my agency
To gain such terms, . . such honourable terms. . .

Terms! cried Pelayo, cutting short at once
That dastard speech, and checking, ere it grew
Too powerful for restraint, the incipient wrath
Which in indignant murmurs breathing round,
Rose like a gathering storm, learn thou what terms
Asturias, this day speaking by my voice,
Doth constitute to be the law between
Thee and thy Country. Our portentous age,
As with an earthquake's desolating force,
Hath loosen'd and disjointed the whole frame
Of social order, and she calls not now
For service with the force of sovereign will.
That which was common duty in old times,
Becomes an arduous, glorious virtue now;
And every one, as between Hell and Heaven,
In free election must be left to chuse.
Asturias asks not of thee to partake
The cup which we have pledged; she claims from none
The dauntless fortitude, the mind resolved,
Which only God can give; . . therefore such peace
As thou canst find where all around is war,
She leaves thee to enjoy. But think not, Count,
That because thou art weak, one valiant arm,
One generous spirit must be lost to Spain!
The vassal owes no service to the Lord
Who to his Country doth acknowledge none.
The summons which thou hast not heart to give,
I and Count Pedro over thy domains
Will send abroad; the vassals who were thine
Will fight beneath our banners, and our wants
Shall from thy lands, as from a patrimony
Which hath reverted to the common stock,
Be fed: such tribute, too, as to the Moors

Thou renderest, we will take: it is the price
Which in this land for weakness must be paid
While evil stars prevail. And mark me, Chief!
Fear is a treacherous counsellor! I know
Thou thinkëst that beneath his horses' hoofs
The Moor will trample our poor numbers down;
But join not, in contempt of us and Heaven,
His multitudes! for if thou shouldst be found
Against thy country, on the readiest tree
Those recreant bones shall rattle in the wind,
When the birds have left them bare.
As thus he spake,
Count Eudon heard and trembled: every joint
Was loosen'd, every fibre of his flesh
Thrill'd, and from every pore effused, cold sweat
Clung on his quivering limbs. Shame forced it forth,
Envy, and inward consciousness, and fear
Predominant, which stifled in his heart
Hatred and rage. Before his livid lips
Could shape to utterance their essay'd reply,
Compassionately Pedro interposed.
Go, Baron, to the Castle, said the Count;
There let thy wound be look'd to, and consult
Thy better mind at leisure. Let this Moor
Attend upon thee there, and when thou wilt,
Follow thy fortunes. . . To Pelayo then
He turn'd, and saying, All-too-long, O Prince,
Hath this unlook'd-for conflict held thee here, . .
He bade his gallant men begin their march.

Flush'd with success, and in auspicious hour,
The Mountaineers set forth. Blessings and prayers
Pursued them at their parting, and the tears
Which fell were tears of fervour, not of grief.
The sun was verging to the western slope
Of Heaven, but they till midnight travell'd on;
Renewing then at early dawn their way,
They held their unremitting course from morn
Till latest eve, such urgent cause impell'd;
And night had closed around, when to the vale
Where Sella in her ampler bed receives
Pionia's stream they came. Massive and black
Pelayo's castle there was seen; its lines
And battlements against the deep blue sky
Distinct in solid darkness visible.
No light is in the tower. Eager to know
The worst, and with that fatal certainty
To terminate intolerable dread,
He spurr'd his courser forward. All his fears
Too surely are fulfill'd, . . for open stand
The doors, and mournfully at times a dog
Fills with his howling the deserted hall.
A moment overcome with wretchedness,
Silent Pelayo stood! recovering then,
Lord God, resign'd he cried, thy will be done!

XIV. THE RESCUE

Count, said Pelayo, Nature hath assign'd
Two sovereign remedies for human grief;
Religion, surest, firmest, first and best,
Strength to the weak and to the wounded balm;
And strenuous action next. Think not I came
With unprovided heart. My noble wife,
In the last solemn words, the last farewell
With which she charged her secret messenger,
Told me that whatsoe'er was my resolve,
She bore a mind prepared. And well I know
The evil, be it what it may, hath found
In her a courage equal to the hour.
Captivity, or death, or what worse pangs,
She in her children may be doom'd to feel,
Will never make that steady soul repent
Its virtuous purpose. I too did not cast
My single life into the lot, but knew
These dearer pledges on the die were set;
And if the worst have fallen, I shall but bear
That in my breast, which, with transfiguring power
Of piety, makes chastening sorrow take
The form of hope, and sees, in Death, the friend
And the restoring Angel. We must rest
Perforce, and wait what tidings night may bring,
Haply of comfort. Ho there! kindle fires,
And see if aught of hospitality
Can yet within these mournful walls be found!
Thus while he spake, lights were descried far off
Moving among the trees, and coming sounds
Were heard as of a distant multitude.
Anon a company of horse and foot,
Advancing in disorderly array,
Came up the vale; before them and beside
Their torches flashed on Sella's rippling stream;
Now gleam'd through chesnut groves, emerging now,
O'er their huge boughs and radiated leaves
Cast broad and bright a transitory glare.
That sight inspired with strength the mountaineers;
All sense of weariness, all wish for rest
At once were gone; impatient in desire
Of second victory alert they stood;
And when the hostile symbols, which from far
Imagination to their wish had shaped,
Vanish'd in nearer vision, high-wrought hope
Departing, left the spirit pall'd and blank.
No turban'd race, no sons of Africa
Were they who now came winding up the vale,
As waving wide before their horses' feet
The torch-light floated, with its hovering glare
Blackening the incumbent and surrounding night.
Helmet and breast-plate glitter'd as they came,
And spears erect; and nearer as they drew
Were the loose folds of female garments seen
On those who led the company. Who then

Had stood beside Pelayo, might have heard
The beating of his heart.
But vainly there
Sought he with wistful eye the well-known forms
Beloved; and plainly might it now be seen
That from some bloody conflict they return'd
Victorious, . . for at every saddle-bow
A gory head was hung. Anon they stopt,
Levelling in quick alarm their ready spears.
Hold! who goes there? cried one. A hundred tongues
Sent forth with one accord the glad reply,
Friends and Asturians. Onward moved the lights, . .
The people knew their Lord.
Then what a shout
Rung through the valley! From their clay-built nests,
Beneath the overbrowing battlements,
Now first disturb'd, the affrighted martins flew,
And uttering notes of terror short and shrill,
Amid the yellow glare and lurid smoke
Wheel'd giddily. Then plainly was it shown
How well the vassals loved their generous Lord,
How like a father the Asturian Prince
Was dear. They crowded round; they clasp his knees;
They snatch'd his hand; they fell upon his neck, . .
They wept; . . they blest Almighty Providence,
Which had restored him thus from bondage free;
God was with them and their good cause, they said;
His hand was here. . . His shield was over them, . .
His spirit was abroad, . . His power display'd:
And pointing to their bloody trophies then,
They told Pelayo there he might behold
The first-fruits of the harvest they should soon
Reap in the field of war! Benignantly,
With voice and look and gesture, did the Prince
To these warm greetings of tumultuous joy
Respond; and sure if at that moment aught
Could for a while have overpower'd those fears
Which from the inmost heart o'er all his frame
Diffused their chilling influence, worthy pride,
And sympathy of love and joy and hope,
Had then possess'd him wholly. Even now
His spirit rose; the sense of power, the sight
Of his brave people, ready where he led
To fight their country's battles, and the thought
Of instant action, and deliverance, . .
If Heaven, which thus far had protected him,
Should favour still, . . revived his heart, and gave
Fresh impulse to its spring. In vain he sought
Amid that turbulent greeting to enquire
Where Gaudiosa was, his children where,
Who call'd them to the field, who captain'd them;
And how these women, thus with arms and death
Environ'd, came amid their company?

For yet, amid the fluctuating light
And tumult of the crowd, he knew them not.

Guisla was one. The Moors had found in her
A willing and concerted prisoner.
Gladly to Gegio, to the renegade
On whom her loose and shameless love was bent,
Had she set forth; and in her heart she cursed
The busy spirit, who, with powerful call
Rousing Pelayo's people, led them on
In quick pursual, and victoriously
Achieved the rescue, to her mind perverse
Unwelcome as unlook'd for. With dismay
She recognized her brother, dreaded now
More than he once was dear; her countenance
Was turn'd toward him, . . not with eager joy
To court his sight, and meeting its first glance,
Exchange delightful welcome, soul with soul;
Hers was the conscious eye, that cannot chuse
But look to what it fears. She could not shun
His presence, and the rigid smile constrain'd,
With which she coldly drest her features, ill
Conceal'd her inward thoughts, and the despite
Of obstinate guilt and unrepentant shame.
Sullenly thus upon her mule she sate,
Waiting the greeting which she did not dare
Bring on. But who is she that at her side,
Upon a stately war-horse eminent,
Holds the loose rein with careless hand? A helm
Presses the clusters of her flaxen hair;
The shield is on her arm; her breast is mail'd;
A sword-belt is her girdle, and right well
It may be seen that sword hath done its work
To-day, for upward from the wrist her sleeve
Is stiff with blood. An unregardant eye,
As one whose thoughts were not of earth, she cast
Upon the turmoil round. One countenance
So strongly mark'd, so passion-worn was there,
That it recall'd her mind. Ha! Maccabee!
Lifting her arm, exultingly she cried,
Did I not tell thee we should meet in joy?
Well, Brother, hast thou done thy part, . . I too
Have not been wanting! Now be His the praise,
From whom the impulse came!
That startling call,
That voice so well remember'd, touch'd the Goth
With timely impulse now; for he had seen
His Mother's face, . . and at her sight, the past
And present mingled like a frightful dream,
Which from some dread reality derives
Its deepest horror. Adosinda's voice
Dispersed the waking vision. Little deem'd
Rusilla at that moment that the child,
For whom her supplications day and night
Were offer'd, breathed the living air. Her heart

Was calm; her placid countenance, though grief
Deeper than time had left its traces there,
Retain'd its dignity serene; yet when
Siverian, pressing through the people, kiss'd
Her reverend hand, some quiet tears ran down.
As she approach'd the Prince, the crowd made way
Respectful. The maternal smile which bore
Her greeting, from Pelayo's heart at once
Dispell'd its boding. What he would have asked
She knew, and bending from her palfrey down,
Told him that they for whom he look'd were safe,
And that in secret he should hear the rest.

XV. RODERICK AT CANGAS

How calmly gliding through the dark-blue sky
The midnight Moon ascends! Her placid beams
Through thinly scatter'd leaves and boughs grotesque,
Mottle with mazy shades the orchard slope;
Here, o'er the chesnut's fretted foliage grey
And massy, motionless they spread; here shine
Upon the crags, deepening with blacker night
Their chasms; and there the glittering argentry
Ripples and glances on the confluent streams.
A lovelier, purer light than that of day
Rests on the hills; and oh how awefully
Into that deep and tranquil firmament
The summits of Auseva rise serene!
The watchman on the battlements partakes
The stillness of the solemn hour; he feels
The silence of the earth, the endless sound
Of flowing water soothes him, and the stars,
Which in that brightest moon-light well-nigh quench'd,
Scarce visible, as in the utmost depth
Of yonder sapphire infinite, are seen,
Draw on with elevating influence
Toward eternity the attemper'd mind.
Musing on worlds beyond the grave he stands,
And to the Virgin Mother silently
Prefers her hymn of praise.
The mountaineers
Before the castle, round their mouldering fires,
Lie on the hearth outstretch'd. Pelayo's hall
Is full, and he upon his careful couch
Hears all around the deep and long-drawn breath
Of sleep: for gentle night hath brought to these
Perfect and undisturb'd repose, alike
Of corporal powers and inward faculty.
Wakeful the while he lay, yet more by hope
Than grief or anxious thoughts possess'd, . . though grief
For Guisla's guilt, which freshen'd in his heart
The memory of their wretched mother's crime,
Still made its presence felt, like the dull sense
Of some perpetual inward malady;

And the whole peril of the future lay
Before him clearly seen. He had heard all;
How that unworthy sister, obstinate
In wrong and shameless, rather seem'd to woo
The upstart renegado than to wait
His wooing; how, as guilt to guilt led on,
Spurning at gentle admonition first,
When Gaudiosa hopelessly forbore
From farther counsel, then in sullen mood
Resentful, Guisla soon began to hate
The virtuous presence before which she felt
Her nature how inferior, and her fault
How foul. Despiteful thus she grew, because
Humbled yet unrepentant. Who could say
To what excess bad passions might impel
A woman thus possess'd? She could not fail
To mark Siverian's absence, for what end
Her conscience but too surely had divined;
And Gaudiosa, well aware that all
To the vile paramour was thus made known,
Had to safe hiding-place with timely fear
Removed her children. Well the event had proved
How needful was that caution; for at night
She sought the mountain solitudes, and morn
Beheld Numacian's soldiers at the gate.
Yet did not sorrow in Pelayo's heart
For this domestic shame prevail that hour,
Nor gathering danger weigh his spirit down.
The anticipated meeting put to flight
These painful thoughts; to-morrow will restore
All whom his heart holds dear; his wife beloved,
No longer now remember'd for regret,
Is present to his soul with hope and joy;
His inward eye beholds Favila's form
In opening youth robust, and Hermesind,
His daughter, lovely as a budding rose;
Their images beguile the hours of night,
Till with the earliest morning he may seek
Their secret hold.
The nightingale not yet
Had ceased her song, nor had the early lark
Her dewy nest forsaken, when the Prince
Upward beside Pionia took his way
Toward Auseva. Heavily to him,
Impatient for the morrow's happiness,
Long night had linger'd, but it seem'd more long
To Roderick's aching heart. He too had watch'd
For dawn, and seen the earliest break of day,
And heard its earliest sounds; and when the Prince
Went forth, the melancholy man was seen
With pensive pace upon Pionia's side
Wandering alone and slow. For he had left
The wearying place of his unrest, that morn
With its cold dews might bathe his throbbing brow,
And with its breath allay the feverish heat
That burnt within. Alas! the gales of morn
Reach not the fever of a wounded heart!
How shall he meet his Mother's eye, how make

His secret known, and from that voice revered
Obtain forgiveness, . . all that he has now
To ask, ere on the lap of earth in peace
He lay his head resign'd ? In silent prayer
He supplicated Heaven to strengthen him
Against that trying hour, there seeking aid
Where all who seek shall find ; and thus his soul
Received support, and gather'd fortitude,
Never than now more needful, for the hour
Was nigh. He saw Siverian drawing near,
And with a dim but quick foreboding met
The good old man ; yet when he heard him say,
My Lady sends to seek thee, like a knell
To one expecting and prepared for death,
But fearing the dread point that hastens on,
It smote his heart. He follow'd silently
And knit his suffering spirit to the proof.

He went resolved to tell his Mother all,
Fall at her feet, and drinking the last dregs
Of bitterness, receive the only good
Earth had in store for him. Resolved for this
He went ; yet was it a relief to find
That painful resolution must await
A fitter season, when no eye but Heaven's
Might witness to their mutual agony.
Count Julian's daughter with Rusilla sate ;
Both had been weeping, both were pale, but calm.
With head as for humility abased
Roderick approach'd, and bending, on his breast
He cross'd his humble arms. Rusilla rose
In reverence to the priestly character,
And with a mournful eye regarding him,
Thus she began. Good Father, I have heard
From my old faithful servant and true friend,
Thou didst reprove the inconsiderate tongue,
That in the anguish of its spirit pour'd
A curse upon my poor unhappy child.
O Father Maccabee, this is a hard world,
And hasty in its judgements ! Time has been,
When not a tongue within the Pyrenees
Dared whisper in dispraise of Roderick's name,
Lest, if the conscious air had caught the sound,
The vengeance of the honest multitude
Should fall upon the traitorous head, or brand
For life-long infamy the lying lips.
Now if a voice be raised in his behalf,
'Tis noted for a wonder, and the man
Who utters the strange speech shall be admired
For such excess of Christian charity.
Thy Christian charity hath not been lost ; . .
Father, I feel its virtue : . . it hath been
Balm to my heart ; . . with words and grateful tears, . .
All that is left me now for gratitude, . .
I thank thee, and beseech thee in thy prayers
That thou wilt still remember Roderick's name.

Roderick so long had to this hour look'd on,
That when the actual point of trial came,

Torpid and numb'd it found him; cold he grew,
And as the vital spirits to the heart
Retreated, o'er his wither'd countenance,
Deathy and damp, a whiter paleness spread.
Unmoved the while, the inward feeling seem'd,
Even in such dull insensibility
As gradual age brings on, or slow disease,
Beneath whose progress lingering life survives
The power of suffering. Wondering at himself,
Yet gathering confidence, he raised his eyes,
Then slowly shaking as he bent his head,
O venerable Lady, he replied,
If aught may comfort that unhappy soul,
It must be thy compassion, and thy prayers.
She whom he most hath wrong'd, she who alone
On earth can grant forgiveness for his crime,
She hath forgiven him; and thy blessing now
Were all that he could ask, . . all that could bring
Profit or consolation to his soul,
If he hath been, as sure we may believe,
A penitent sincere.
Oh had he lived,
Replied Rusilla, never penitence
Had equall'd his! full well I know his heart,
Vehement in all things. He would on himself
Have wreak'd such penance as had reach'd the height
Of fleshly suffering . . yea, which being told
With its portentous rigour should have made
The memory of his fault, o'erpower'd and lost
In shuddering pity and astonishment,
Fade like a feebler horror. Otherwise
Seem'd good to Heaven. I murmur not, nor doubt
The boundless mercy of redeeming love.
For sure I trust that not in his offence
Harden'd and reprobate was my lost son,
A child of wrath, cut off! . . that dreadful thought,
Not even amid the first fresh wretchedness,
When the ruin burst around me like a flood,
Assail'd my soul. I ever deem'd his fall
An act of sudden madness; and this day
Hath in unlook'd-for confirmation given
A livelier hope, a more assurëd faith.
Smiling benignant then amid her tears,
She took Florinda by the hand, and said,
I little thought that I should live to bless
Count Julian's daughter! She hath brought to me
The last, the best, the only comfort earth
Could minister to this afflicted heart,
And my grey hairs may now unto the grave
Go down in peace.
Happy, Florinda cried,
Are they for whom the grave hath peace in store!
The wrongs they have sustain'd, the woes they bear,
Pass not that holy threshold, where Death heals
The broken heart. O Lady, thou may'st trust
In humble hope, through Him who on the Cross
Gave his atoning blood for lost mankind,

To meet beyond the grave thy child forgiven.
I too with Roderick there may interchange
Forgiveness. But the grief which wastes away
This mortal frame, hastening the happy hour
Of my enlargement, is but a light part
Of what my soul endures! . . that grief hath lost
Its sting: . . I have a keener sorrow here, . .
One which, . . but God forefend that dire event, . .
May pass with me the portals of the grave,
And with a thought, like sin which cannot die,
Embitter Heaven. My father hath renounced
His hope in Christ! It was his love for me
Which drove him to perdition. . . I was born
To ruin all who loved me, . . all I loved!
Perhaps I sinn'd in leaving him; . . that fear
Rises within me to disturb the peace
Which I should else have found.
To Roderick then
The pious mourner turn'd her suppliant eyes:
O Father, there is virtue in thy prayers! . .
I do beseech thee offer them to Heaven
In his behalf! For Roderick's sake, for mine,
Wrestle with Him whose name is Merciful,
That Julian may with penitence be touch'd,
And clinging to the Cross, implore that grace
Which ne'er was sought in vain. For Roderick's sake
And mine, pray for him! We have been the cause
Of his offence! What other miseries
May from that same unhappy source have risen,
Are earthly, temporal, reparable all; . .
But if a soul be lost through our misdeeds,
That were eternal evil! Pray for him,
Good Father Maccabee, and be thy prayers
More fervent, as the deeper is the crime.

While thus Florinda spake, the dog who lay
Before Rusilla's feet, eyeing him long
And wistfully, had recognized at length,
Changed as he was and in those sordid weeds,
His royal master. And he rose and lick'd
His wither'd hand, and earnestly look'd up
With eyes whose human meaning did not need
The aid of speech; and moan'd, as if at once
To court and chide the long-withheld caress.
A feeling uncommix'd with sense of guilt
Or shame, yet painfulest, thrill'd through the King;
But he to self-controul now long inured,
Represt his rising heart, nor other tears,
Full as his struggling bosom was, let fall
Than seem'd to follow on Florinda's words.
Looking toward her then, yet so that still
He shunn'd the meeting of her eye, he said,
Virtuous and pious as thou art, and ripe
For Heaven, O Lady, I must think the man
Hath not by his good Angel been cast off
For whom thy supplications rise. The Lord

Whose justice doth in its unerring course
Visit the children for the sire's offence,
Shall He not in his boundless mercy hear
The daughter's prayer, and for her sake restore
The guilty parent ? My soul shall with thine
In earnest and continual duty join. . .
How deeply, how devoutly, He will know
To whom the cry is raised.
Thus having said,
Deliberately, in self-possession still,
Himself from that most painful interview
Dispeeding, he withdrew. The watchful dog
Follow'd his footsteps close. But he retired
Into the thickest grove; there yielding way
To his o'erburthen'd nature, from all eyes
Apart, he cast himself upon the ground,
And threw his arms around the dog, and cried,
While tears stream'd down, Thou, Theron, then hast known
Thy poor lost master, . . Theron, none but thou!

XVI. COVADONGA

Meantime Pelayo up the vale pursued
Eastward his way, before the sun had climb'd
Auseva's brow, or shed his silvering beams
Upon Europa's summit, where the snows
Through all revolving seasons hold their seat.
A happy man he went, his heart at rest,
Of hope and virtue and affection full,
To all exhilarating influences
Of earth and heaven alive. With kindred joy
He heard the lark, who from her airy height,
On twinkling pinions poised, pour'd forth profuse,
In thrilling sequence of exuberant song,
As one whose joyous nature overflow'd
With life and power, her rich and rapturous strain.
The early bee, buzzing along the way,
From flower to flower, bore gladness on its wing
To his rejoicing sense; and he pursued,
With quicken'd eye alert, the frolic hare,
Where from the green herb in her wanton path
She brush'd away the dews. For he long time,
Far from his home and from his native hills,
Had dwelt in bondage; and the mountain breeze,
Which he had with the breath of infancy
Inhaled, such impulse to his heart restored,
As if the seasons had roll'd back, and life
Enjoy'd a second spring.
Through fertile fields
He went, by cots with pear-trees overbower'd,
Or spreading to the sun their trelliced vines;
Through orchards now, and now by thymy banks,
Where wooden hives in some warm nook were hid
From wind and shower; and now thro' shadowy paths,
Where hazels fringed Pionia's vocal stream;
Till where the loftier hills to narrower bound
Confine the vale, he reach'd those huts remote

Which should hereafter to the noble line
Of Soto origin and name impart:
A gallant lineage, long in fields of war
And faithful chronicler's enduring page
Blazon'd: but most by him illustrated,
Avid of gold, yet greedier of renown,
Whom not the spoils of Atabalipa
Could satisfy insatiate,[1] nor the fame
Of that wide empire overthrown appease;
But he to Florida's disastrous shores
In evil hour his gallant comrades led,
Through savage woods and swamps, and hostile tribes,
The Apalachian arrows, and the snares
Of wilier foes, hunger, and thirst, and toil;
Till from ambition's feverish dream the touch
Of Death awoke him; and when he had seen
The fruit of all his treasures, all his toil,
Foresight, and long endurance, fade away,
Earth to the restless one refusing rest,
In the great river's midland bed he left
His honour'd bones.
A mountain rivulet,
Now calm and lovely in its summer course,
Held by those huts its everlasting way
Towards Pionia. They whose flocks and herds
Drink of its water call it Deva. Here
Pelayo southward up the ruder vale
Traced it, his guide unerring. Amid heaps
Of mountain wreck, on either side thrown high,
The wide-spread traces of its wintry might,
The tortuous channel wound; o'er beds of sand
Here silently it flows; here from the rock
Rebutted, curls and eddies; plunges here
Precipitate; here roaring among crags,
It leaps and foams and whirls and hurries on.
Grey alders here and bushy hazels hid
The mossy side; their wreath'd and knotted feet
Bared by the current, now against its force
Repaying the support they found, upheld
The bank secure. Here, bending to the stream,
The birch fantastic stretch'd its rugged trunk,
Tall and erect, from whence, as from their base,
Each like a tree, its silver branches grew.
The cherry here hung for the birds of heaven
Its rosy fruit on high. The elder there
Its purple berries o'er the water bent,
Heavily hanging. Here, amid the brook,
Grey as the stone to which it clung, half root,
Half trunk, the young ash rises from the rock;
And there its parent lifts a lofty head,
And spreads its graceful boughs; the passing wind
With twinkling motion lifts the silent leaves,
And shakes its rattling tufts.
Soon had the Prince
Behind him left the farthest dwelling-place
Of man; no fields of waving corn were here,
Nor wicker storehouse for the autumnal grain;
Vineyard, nor bowery fig, nor fruitful grove;

[1] Hernando de Soto (S.).

Only the rocky vale, the mountain stream,
Incumbent crags, and hills that over hills
Arose on either hand, here hung with woods,
Here rich with heath, that o'er some smooth ascent
Its purple glory spread, or golden gorse;
Bare here, and striated with many a hue,
Scored by the wintry rain; by torrents here
Riven, and with overhanging rocks abrupt.
Pelayo, upward as he cast his eyes
Where crags loose-hanging o'er the narrow pass
Impended, there beheld his country's strength
Insuperable, and in his heart rejoiced.
Oh that the Musselman were here, he cried,
With all his myriads! While thy day endures,
Moor! thou may'st lord it in the plains; but here
Hath Nature for the free and brave prepared
A sanctuary, where no oppressor's power,
No might of human tyranny can pierce.

The tears which started then sprang not alone
From lofty thoughts of elevating joy;
For love and admiration had their part,
And virtuous pride. Here then thou hast retired,
My Gaudiosa! in his heart he said;
Excellent woman! ne'er was richer boon
By fate benign to favour'd man indulged,
Than when thou wert before the face of Heaven
Given me to be my children's mother, brave
And virtuous as thou art! Here thou hast fled,
Thou who wert nurst in palaces, to dwell
In rocks and mountain caves! . . The thought was proud,
Yet not without a sense of inmost pain;
For never had Pelayo till that hour
So deeply felt the force of solitude.
High over head the eagle soar'd serene,
And the grey lizard on the rocks below
Bask'd in the sun: no living creature else
In this remotest wilderness was seen;
Nor living voice was there, . . only the flow
Of Deva, and the rushing of its springs
Long in the distance heard, which nearer now,
With endless repercussion deep and loud,
Throbb'd on the dizzy sense.
The ascending vale,
Long straiten'd by the narrowing mountains, here
Was closed. In front a rock, abrupt and bare,
Stood eminent, in height exceeding far
All edifice of human power, by King
Or Caliph, or barbaric Sultan rear'd,
Or mightier tyrants of the world of old,
Assyrian or Egyptian, in their pride;
Yet far above, beyond the reach of sight,
Swell after swell, the heathery mountain rose.
Here, in two sources, from the living rock
The everlasting springs of Deva gush'd.
Upon a smooth and grassy plat below,
By Nature there as for an altar drest,
They join'd their sister stream, which from the earth
Well'd silently. In such a scene rude man
With pardonable error might have knelt,
Feeling a present Deity, and made
His offering to the fountain Nymph devout.

The arching rock disclosed above the springs
A cave, where hugest son of giant birth,
That e'er of old in forest of romance
'Gainst knights and ladies waged discourteous war,
Erect within the portal might have stood.
The broken stone allow'd for hand and foot
No difficult ascent, above the base
In height a tall man's stature, measured thrice.
No holier spot than Covadonga Spain
Boasts in her wide extent, though all her realms
Be with the noblest blood of martyrdom
In elder or in later days enrich'd,
And glorified with tales of heavenly aid
By many a miracle made manifest;
Nor in the heroic annals of her fame
Doth she show forth a scene of more renown.
Then, save the hunter, drawn in keen pursuit
Beyond his wonted haunts, or shepherd's boy,
Following the pleasure of his straggling flock,
None knew the place.
Pelayo, when he saw
Those glittering sources and their sacred cave,
Took from his side the bugle silver-tipt,
And with a breath long drawn and slow expired
Sent forth that strain, which, echoing from the walls
Of Cangas, wont to tell his glad return
When from the chace he came. At the first sound
Favila started in the cave, and cried,
My father's horn! . . . A sudden flush suffused
Hermesind's cheek, and she with quicken'd eye
Look'd eager to her mother silently;
But Gaudiosa trembled and grew pale,
Doubting her sense deceived. A second time
The bugle breathed its well-known notes abroad;
And Hermesind around her mother's neck
Threw her white arms, and earnestly exclaim'd,
'Tis he! . . But when a third and broader blast
Rung in the echoing archway, ne'er did wand,
With magic power endued, call up a sight
So strange, as sure in that wild solitude
It seem'd, when from the bowels of the rock
The mother and her children hasten'd forth;
She in the sober charms and dignity
Of womanhood mature, nor verging yet
Upon decay; in gesture like a Queen,
Such inborn and habitual majesty
Ennobled all her steps, . . or Priestess, chosen
Because within such faultless work of Heaven
Inspiring Deity might seem to make
Its habitation known. . . Favila such
In form and stature as the Sea Nymph's son,
When that wise Centaur from his cave well-pleased
Beheld the boy divine his growing strength
Against some shaggy lionet essay,
And fixing in the half-grown mane his hands,
Roll with him in fierce dalliance intertwined.
But like a creature of some higher sphere
His sister came; she scarcely touch'd the rock,

So light was Hermesind's aërial speed.
Beauty and grace and innocence in her
In heavenly union shone. One who had held
The faith of elder Greece, would sure have thought
She was some glorious nymph of seed divine,
Oread or Dryad, of Diana's train
The youngest and the loveliest: yea, she seem'd
Angel, or soul beatified, from realms
Of bliss, on errand of parental love
To earth re-sent, . . if tears and trembling limbs
With such celestial natures might consist.

Embraced by all, in turn embracing each,
The husband and the father for awhile
Forgot his country and all things beside:
Life hath few moments of such pure delight,
Such foretaste of the perfect joy of Heaven.
And when the thought recurr'd of sufferings past,
Perils which threaten'd still, and arduous toil
Yet to be undergone, remember'd griefs
Heighten'd the present happiness; and hope
Upon the shadows of futurity
Shone like the sun upon the morning mists,
When driven before his rising rays they roll,
And melt and leave the prospect bright and clear.

When now Pelayo's eyes had drunk their fill
Of love from those dear faces, he went up
To view the hiding-place. Spacious it was
As that Sicilian cavern in the hill
Wherein earth-shaking Neptune's giant son
Duly at eve was wont to fold his flock,
Ere the wise Ithacan, over that brute force
By wiles prevailing, for a life-long night
Seel'd his broad eye. The healthful air had here
Free entrance, and the cheerful light of heaven;
But at the end, an opening in the floor
Of rock disclosed a wider vault below,
Which never sun-beam visited, nor breath
Of vivifying morning came to cheer.
No light was there but that which from above
In dim reflection fell, or found its way,
Broken and quivering, through the glassy stream,
Where through the rock it gush'd. That shadowy light
Sufficed to show, where from their secret bed
The waters issued; with whose rapid course,
And with whose everlasting cataracts
Such motion to the chill damp atmosphere
Was given, as if the solid walls of rock
Were shaken with the sound.
Glad to respire
The upper air, Pelayo hasten'd back
From that drear den. Look! Hermesind exclaim'd,
Taking her father's hand, thou hast not seen
My chamber: . . See! . . did ever ring-dove chuse
In so secure a nook her hiding-place,
Or build a warmer nest? 'Tis fragrant too,

As warm, and not more sweet than soft; for thyme
And myrtle with the elastic heath are laid,
And, over all, this dry and pillowy moss. . .
Smiling she spake. Pelayo kiss'd the child,
And, sighing, said within himself, I trust
In Heaven, whene'er thy May of life is come,
Sweet bird, that thou shalt have a blither bower!
Fitlier, he thought, such chamber might beseem
Some hermit of Hilarion's school austere,
Or old Antonius, he who from the hell
Of his bewilder'd phantasy saw fiends
In actual vision, a foul throng grotesque
Of all horrific shapes and forms obscene
Crowd in broad day before his open eyes.
That feeling cast a momentary shade
Of sadness o'er his soul. But deeper thoughts,
If he might have foreseen the things to come,
Would there have fill'd him; for within that cave
His own remains were one day doom'd to find
Their final place of rest; and in that spot,
Where that dear child with innocent delight
Had spread her mossy couch, the sepulchre
Shall in the consecrated rock be hewn,
Where with Alphonso, her beloved lord,
Laid side by side, must Hermesind partake
The everlasting marriage-bed, when he,
Leaving a name perdurable on earth,
Hath changed his earthly for a heavenly crown.
Dear child, upon that fated spot she stood,
In all the beauty of her opening youth,
In health's rich bloom, in virgin innocence,
While her eyes sparkled and her heart o'erflow'd
With pure and perfect joy of filial love.

Many a slow century since that day hath fill'd
Its course, and countless multitudes have trod
With pilgrim feet that consecrated cave;
Yet not in all those ages, amid all
The untold concourse, hath one breast been swoln
With such emotions as Pelayo felt
That hour. O Gaudiosa, he exclaim'd,
And thou couldst seek for shelter here, amid
This aweful solitude, in mountain caves!
Thou noble spirit! Oh when hearts like thine
Grow on this sacred soil, would it not be
In me, thy husband, double infamy,
And tenfold guilt, if I despair'd of Spain?
In all her visitations, favouring Heaven
Hath left her still the unconquerable mind;
And thus being worthy of redemption, sure
Is she to be redeem'd.

Beholding her
Through tears he spake, and prest upon her lips
A kiss of deepest love. Think ever thus,
She answer'd, and that faith will give the power
In which it trusts. When to this mountain hold
These children, thy dear images, I brought,
I said within myself, where should they fly
But to the bosom of their native hills?
I brought them here as to a sanctuary,

Where, for the temple's sake, the indwelling God
Would guard his supplicants. O my dear Lord,
Proud as I was to know that they were thine,
Was it a sin if I almost believed,
That Spain, her destiny being link'd with theirs,
Must save the precious charge ?
So let us think,
The Chief replied, so feel and teach and act.
Spain is our common parent: let the sons
Be to the parent true, and in her strength
And Heaven, their sure deliverance they will find.

XVII. RODERICK AND SIVERIAN

O HOLIEST Mary, Maid and Mother! thou
In Covadonga, at thy rocky shrine,
Hast witness'd whatsoe'er of human bliss
Heart can conceive most perfect! Faithful love,
Long crost by envious stars, hath there attain'd
Its crown, in endless matrimony given;
The youthful mother there hath to the font
Her first-born borne, and there, with deeper sense
Of gratitude for that dear babe redeem'd
From threatening death, return'd to pay her vows.
But ne'er on nuptial, nor baptismal day,
Nor from their grateful pilgrimage discharged,
Did happier group their way down Deva's vale
Rejoicing hold, than this blest family,
O'er whom the mighty Spirit of the Land
Spread his protecting wings. The children, free
In youthhead's happy season from all cares
That might disturb the hour, yet capable
Of that intense and unalloy'd delight
Which childhood feels when it enjoys again
The dear parental presence long deprived;
Nor were the parents now less bless'd than they,
Even to the height of human happiness;
For Gaudiosa and her Lord that hour
Let no misgiving thoughts intrude; she fix'd
Her hopes on him, and his were fix'd on Heaven;
And hope in that courageous heart derived
Such rooted strength and confidence assured
In righteousness, that 'twas to him like faith . .
An everlasting sunshine of the soul,
Illumining and quickening all its powers.

But on Pionia's side meantime a heart
As generous, and as full of noble thoughts,
Lay stricken with the deadliest bolts of grief.
Upon a smooth grey stone sate Roderick there;
The wind above him stirr'd the hazel boughs,
And murmuring at his feet the river ran.
He sate with folded arms and head declined
Upon his breast feeding on bitter thoughts,

Till nature gave him in the exhausted sense
Of woe a respite something like repose;
And then the quiet sound of gentle winds
And waters with their lulling consonance
Beguiled him of himself. Of all within
Oblivious there he sate, sentient alone
Of outward nature, . . of the whispering leaves
That soothed his ear, . . the genial breath of Heaven
That fann'd his cheek, . . the stream's perpetual flow,
That, with its shadows and its glancing lights,
Dimples and thread-like motions infinite,
For ever varying and yet still the same,
Like time toward eternity, ran by.
Resting his head upon his master's knees,
Upon the bank beside him Theron lay.
What matters change of state and circumstance,
Or lapse of years, with all their dread events,
To him? What matters it that Roderick wears
The crown no longer, nor the sceptre wields? . .
It is the dear-loved hand, whose friendly touch
Had flatter'd him so oft; it is the voice,
At whose glad summons to the field so oft
From slumber he had started, shaking off
Dreams of the chace, to share the actual joy;
The eye, whose recognition he was wont
To watch and welcome with exultant tongue.

A coming step, unheard by Roderick, roused
His watchful ear, and turning he beheld
Siverian. Father, said the good old man,
As Theron rose and fawn'd about his knees,
Hast thou some charm, which draws about thee thus
The hearts of all our house, . . even to the beast
That lacks discourse of reason, but too oft,
With uncorrupted feeling and dumb faith,
Puts lordly man to shame? . . The King replied,
'Tis that mysterious sense by which mankind
To fix their friendships and their loves are led,
And which with fainter influence doth extend
To such poor things as this. As we put off
The cares and passions of this fretful world,
It may be too that we thus far approach
To elder nature, and regain in part
The privilege through sin in Eden lost.
The timid hare soon learns that she may trust
The solitary penitent, and birds
Will light upon the hermit's harmless hand.

Thus Roderick answer'd in excursive speech,
Thinking to draw the old man's mind from what
Might touch him else too nearly, and himself
Disposed to follow on the lure he threw,
As one whom such imaginations led
Out of the world of his own miseries.
But to regardless ears his words were given,
For on the dog Siverian gazed the while,
Pursuing his own thoughts. Thou hast not felt,

Exclaim'd the old man, the earthquake and the storm;
The kingdom's overthrow, the wreck of Spain,
The ruin of thy royal master's house,
Have reach'd not thee! . . Then turning to the King,
When the destroying enemy drew nigh
Toledo, he continued, and we fled
Before their fury, even while her grief
Was fresh, my Mistress would not leave behind
This faithful creature. Well we knew she thought
Of Roderick then, although she named him not;
For never since the fatal certainty
Fell on us all, hath that unhappy name,
Save in her prayers, been known to pass her lips
Before this day. She names him now, and weeps;
But now her tears are tears of thankfulness,
For blessed hath thy coming been to her
And all who loved the King.
His faltering voice
Here fail'd him, and he paused: recovering soon,
When that poor injured Lady, he pursued,
Did in my presence to the Prince absolve
The unhappy King. . .
Absolve him! Roderick cried,
And in that strong emotion turn'd his face
Sternly toward Siverian, for the sense
Of shame and self-reproach drove from his mind
All other thoughts. The good old man replied,
Of human judgements humanly I speak.
Who knows not what Pelayo's life hath been?
Not happier in all dear domestic ties,
Than worthy for his virtue of the bliss
Which is that virtue's fruit; and yet did he
Absolve, upon Florinda's tale, the King.
Siverian, thus he said, what most I hoped,
And still within my secret heart believed,
Is now made certain. Roderick hath been
More sinn'd against than sinning. And with that
He clasp'd his hands, and, lifting them to Heaven,
Cried, Would to God that he were yet alive!
For not more gladly did I draw my sword
Against Witiza in our common cause,
Than I would fight beneath his banners now,
And vindicate his name!
Did he say this?
The Prince? Pelayo? in astonishment
Roderick exclaim'd. . . He said it, quoth the old man.
None better knew his kinsman's noble heart,
None loved him better, none bewail'd him more:
And as he felt, like me, for his reproach
A deeper grief than for his death, even so
He cherish'd in his heart the constant thought
Something was yet untold, which, being known,
Would palliate his offence, and make the fall
Of one till then so excellently good,
Less monstrous, less revolting to belief,
More to be pitied, more to be forgiven.

While thus he spake, the fallen King felt his face
Burn, and his blood flow fast. Down, guilty thoughts!

Firmly he said within his soul; lie still,
Thou heart of flesh! I thought thou hadst been quell'd,
And quell'd thou shalt be! Help me, O my God,
That I may crucify this inward foe!
Yea, thou hast help'd me, Father! I am strong,
O Saviour, in thy strength.
As he breath'd thus
His inward supplications, the old man
Eyed him with frequent and unsteady looks.
He had a secret trembling on his lips,
And hesitated, still irresolute
In utterance to embody the dear hope:
Fain would he have it strengthen'd and assured
By this concording judgement, yet he fear'd
To have it chill'd in cold accoil. At length
Venturing, he brake with interrupted speech
The troubled silence. Father Maccabee,
I cannot rest till I have laid my heart
Open before thee. When Pelayo wish'd
That his poor kinsman were alive to rear
His banner once again, a sudden thought . .
A hope . . a fancy . . what shall it be call'd?
Possess'd me, that perhaps the wish might see
Its glad accomplishment, . . that Roderick lived,
And might in glory take the field once more
For Spain. . . I see thou startest at the thought!
Yet spurn it not with hasty unbelief,
As though 'twere utterly beyond the scope
Of possible contingency. I think
That I have calmly satisfied myself
How this is more than idle fancy, more
Than mere imaginations of a mind
Which from its wishes builds a baseless faith.
His horse, his royal robe, his horned helm,
His mail and sword were found upon the field;
But if King Roderick had in battle fallen,
That sword, I know, would only have been found
Clench'd in the hand which, living, knew so well
To wield the dreadful steel! Not in the throng
Confounded, nor amid the torpid stream,
Opening with ignominious arms a way
For flight, would he have perish'd! Where the strife
Was hottest, ring'd about with slaughter'd foes,
Should Roderick have been found: by this sure mark
Ye should have known him, if nought else remain'd,
That his whole body had been gored with wounds,
And quill'd with spears, as if the Moors had felt
That in his single life the victory lay,
More than in all the host!
Siverian's eyes
Shone with a youthful ardour while he spake,
His gathering brow grew stern, and as he raised
His arm, a warrior's impulse character'd
The impassion'd gesture. But the King was calm
And heard him with unchanging countenance;
For he had taken his resolve, and felt
Once more the peace of God within his soul,

As in that hour when by his father's grave
He knelt before Pelayo.
Soon the old man
Pursued in calmer tones, . . Thus much I dare
Believe, that Roderick fell not on that day
When treason brought about his overthrow.
If yet he live, for sure I think I know
His noble mind, 'tis in some wilderness,
Where, in some savage den inhumed, he drags
The weary load of life, and on his flesh
As on a mortal enemy, inflicts
Fierce vengeance with immitigable hand.
Oh that I knew but where to bend my way
In his dear search! my voice perhaps might reach
His heart, might reconcile him to himself,
Restore him to his mother ere she dies,
His people and his country: with the sword,
Them and his own good name should he redeem.
Oh might I but behold him once again
Leading to battle these intrepid bands,
Such as he was, . . yea rising from his fall
More glorious, more beloved! Soon I believe
Joy would accomplish then what grief hath fail'd
To do with this old heart, and I should die
Clasping his knees with such intense delight,
That when I woke in Heaven, even Heaven itself
Could have no higher happiness in store.

Thus fervently he spake, and copious tears
Ran down his cheeks. Full oft the Royal Goth,
Since he came forth again among mankind,
Had trembled lest some curious eye should read
His lineaments too closely; now he long'd
To fall upon the neck of that old man,
And give his full heart utterance. But the sense
Of duty, by the pride of self-controul
Corroborate, made him steadily repress
His yearning nature. Whether Roderick live,
Paying in penitence the bitter price
Of sin, he answered, or if earth hath given
Rest to his earthly part, is only known
To him and Heaven. Dead is he to the world;
And let not these imaginations rob
His soul of thy continual prayers, whose aid
Too surely, in whatever world, he needs.
The faithful love that mitigates his fault,
Heavenward addrest, may mitigate his doom.
Living or dead, old man, be sure his soul, . .
It were unworthy else, . . doth hold with thine
Entire communion! Doubt not he relies
Firmly on thee, as on a father's love,
Counts on thy offices, and joins with thee
In sympathy and fervent act of faith,
Though regions, or though worlds, should intervene.
Lost as he is, to Roderick this must be
Thy first, best, dearest duty; next must be
To hold right onward in that noble path,
Which he would counsel, could his voice be heard.
Now therefore aid me, while I call upon
The Leaders and the People, that this day
We may acclaim Pelayo for our King.

XVIII. THE ACCLAMATION

Now, when from Covadonga, down the vale
Holding his way, the princely mountaineer
Came with that happy family in sight
Of Cangas and his native towers, far off
He saw before the gate, in fair array,
The assembled land. Broad banners were display'd,
And spears were sparkling to the sun, shields shone,
And helmets glitter'd, and the blairing horn,
With frequent sally of impatient joy,
Provoked the echoes round. Well he areeds,
From yonder ensigns and augmented force,
That Odoar and the Primate from the west
Have brought their aid; but wherefore all were thus
Instructed as for some great festival,
He found not, till Favila's quicker eye
Catching the ready buckler, the glad boy
Leapt up, and clapping his exultant hands,
Shouted, King! King! my father shall be King
This day! Pelayo started at the word,
And the first thought which smote him brought a sigh
For Roderick's fall; the second was of hope,
Deliverance for his country, for himself
Enduring fame, and glory for his line.
That high prophetic forethought gather'd strength,
As looking to his honour'd mate, he read
Her soul's accordant augury; her eyes
Brighten'd; the quicken'd action of the blood
Tinged with a deeper hue her glowing cheek,
And on her lips there sate a smile which spake
The honourable pride of perfect love,
Rejoicing, for her husband's sake, to share
The lot he chose, the perils he defied,
The lofty fortune which their faith foresaw.

Roderick, in front of all the assembled troops,
Held the broad buckler, following to the end
That steady purpose to the which his zeal
Had this day wrought the Chiefs. Tall as himself,
Erect it stood beside him, and his hands
Hung resting on the rim. This was an hour
That sweeten'd life, repaid and recompensed
All losses; and although it could not heal
All griefs, yet laid them for awhile to rest.
The active agitating joy that fill'd
The vale, that with contagious influence spread
Through all the exulting mountaineers, that gave
New ardour to all spirits, to all breasts
Inspired fresh impulse of excited hope,
Moved every tongue, and strengthen'd every limb, . .
That joy which every man reflected saw
From every face of all the multitude,
And heard in every voice, in every sound,
Reach'd not the King. Aloof from sympathy,
He from the solitude of his own soul
Beheld the busy scene. None shared or knew
His deep and incommunicable joy;

None but that heavenly Father, who alone
Beholds the struggles of the heart, alone
Sees and rewards the secret sacrifice.

Among the chiefs conspicuous, Urban stood,
He whom, with well-weigh'd choice, in arduous time,
To arduous office the consenting Church
Had call'd when Sindered fear-smitten fled;
Unfaithful shepherd, who for life alone
Solicitous, forsook his flock, when most
In peril and in suffering they required
A pastor's care. Far off at Rome he dwells
In ignominious safety, while the Church
Keeps in her annals the deserter's name,
But from the service which with daily zeal
Devout her ancient prelacy recalls,
Blots it, unworthy to partake her prayers.
Urban, to that high station thus being call'd,
From whence disanimating fear had driven
The former primate, for the general weal
Consulting first, removed with timely care
The relics and the written works of Saints,
Toledo's choicest treasure prized beyond
All wealth, their living and their dead remains;
These to the mountain fastnesses he bore
Of unsubdued Cantabria, there deposed,
One day to be the boast of yet unbuilt
Oviedo, and the dear idolatry
Of multitudes unborn. To things of state
Then giving thought mature, he held advice
With Odoar, whom of counsel competent
And firm of heart he knew. What then they plann'd,
Time and the course of over-ruled events
To earlier act had ripen'd, than their hope
Had ever in its gladdest dream proposed;
And here by agents unforeseen, and means
Beyond the scope of foresight brought about,
This day they saw their dearest heart's desire
Accorded them: All-able Providence
Thus having ordered all, that Spain this hour
With happiest omens, and on surest base,
Should from its ruins rear again her throne.

For acclamation and for sacring now
One form must serve, more solemn for the breach
Of old observances, whose absence here
Deeplier impress'd the heart, than all display
Of regal pomp and wealth pontifical,
Of vestments radiant with their gems, and stiff
With ornature of gold; the glittering train,
The long procession, and the full-voiced choir.
This day the forms of piety and war,
In strange but fitting union must combine.
Not in his alb and cope and orary
Came Urban now, nor wore he mitre here,
Precious or auriphrygiate; bare of head
He stood, all else in arms complete, and o'er

His gorget's iron rings the pall was thrown
Of wool undyed, which on the Apostle's tomb
Gregory had laid, and sanctified with prayer;
That from the living Pontiff and the dead
Replete with holiness, it might impart
Doubly derived its grace. One Page beside
Bore his broad-shadow'd helm; another's hand
Held the long spear, more suited in these times
For Urban, than the crosier richly wrought
With silver foliature, the elaborate work
Of Grecian or Italian artist, train'd
In the eastern capital, or sacred Rome,
Still o'er the West predominant, though fallen.
Better the spear befits the shepherd's hand
When robbers break the fold. Now he had laid
The weapon by, and held a natural cross
Of rudest form, unpeel'd, even as it grew
On the near oak that morn.
Mutilate alike
Of royal rites was this solemnity.
Where was the rubied crown, the sceptre where,
And where the golden pome, the proud array
Of ermines, aureate vests, and jewelry,
With all which Leuvigild for after kings
Left, ostentatious of his power? The Moor
Had made his spoil of these, and on the field
Of Xeres, where contending multitudes
Had trampled it beneath their bloody feet,
The standard of the Goths forgotten lay
Defiled, and rotting there in sun and rain.
Utterly is it lost; nor evermore
Herald or antiquary's patient search
Shall from forgetfulness avail to save
Those blazon'd arms, so fatally of old
Renown'd through all the affrighted Occident.
That banner, before which imperial Rome
First to a conqueror bow'd her head abased;
Which when the dreadful Hun, with all his powers,
Came like a deluge rolling o'er the world,
Made head, and in the front of battle broke
His force, till then resistless; which so oft
Had with alternate fortune braved the Frank:
Driven the Byzantine from the farthest shores
Of Spain, long lingering there, to final flight;
And of their kingdoms and their name despoil'd
The Vandal, and the Alan, and the Sueve;
Blotted from human records is it now
As it had never been. So let it rest
With things forgotten! But Oblivion ne'er
Shall cancel from the historic roll, nor Time,
Who changeth all, obscure that fated sign,
Which brighter now than mountain snows at noon
To the bright sun displays its argent field.

Rose not the vision then upon thy soul,
O Roderick, when within that argent field

Thou saw'st the rampant Lion, red as if
Upon some noblest quarry he had roll'd,
Rejoicing in his satiate rage, and drunk
With blood and fury ? Did the auguries
Which open'd on thy spirit bring with them
A perilous consolation, deadening heart
And soul, yea worse than death, . . that thou through all
Thy chequer'd way of life, evil and good,
Thy errors and thy virtues, hadst but been
The poor mere instrument of things ordain'd, . .
Doing or suffering, impotent alike
To will or act, . . perpetually bemock'd
With semblance of volition, yet in all
Blind worker of the ways of destiny !
That thought intolerable, which in the hour
Of woe indignant conscience had repell'd
As little might it find reception now,
When the regenerate spirit self-approved
Beheld its sacrifice complete. With faith
Elate, he saw the banner'd Lion float
Refulgent, and recall'd that thrilling shout
Which he had heard when on Romano's grave
The joy of victory woke him from his dream,
And sent him with prophetic hope to work
Fulfilment of the great events ordain'd,
There in imagination's inner world
Prefigured to his soul.
Alone, advanced
Before the ranks, the Goth in silence stood,
While from all voices round, loquacious joy
Mingled its buzz continuous with the blast
Of horn, shrill pipe, and tinkling cymbals' clash,
And sound of deafening drum. But when the Prince
Drew nigh, and Urban with the cross upheld
Stept forth to meet him, all at once were still'd
With instantaneous hush ; as when the wind,
Before whose violent gusts the forest oaks,
Tossing like billows their tempestuous heads,
Roar like a raging sea, suspends its force,
And leaves so dead a calm that not a leaf
Moves on the silent spray. The passing air
Bore with it from the woodland undisturb'd
The ringdove's wooing, and the quiet voice
Of waters warbling near.
Son of a race
Of Heroes and of Kings ! the Primate thus
Address'd him, Thou in whom the Gothic blood,
Mingling with old Iberia's, hath restored
To Spain a ruler of her native line,
Stand forth, and in the face of God and man
Swear to uphold the right, abate the wrong,
With equitable hand, protect the Cross
Whereon thy lips this day shall seal their vow,
And underneath that hallow'd symbol, wage
Holy and inextinguishable war
Against the accursëd nation that usurps
Thy country's sacred soil !
So speak of me
Now and for ever, O my countrymen !

Replied Pelayo; and so deal with me
Here and hereafter, thou, Almighty God,
In whom I put my trust!
Lord God of Hosts,
Urban pursued, of Angels and of Men
Creator and Disposer, King of Kings,
Ruler of Earth and Heaven, . . look down this day,
And multiply thy blessings on the head
Of this thy servant, chosen in thy sight!
Be thou his counsellor, his comforter,
His hope, his joy, his refuge, and his strength;
Crown him with justice, and with fortitude,
Defend him with thine all-sufficient shield,
Surround him every where with the right hand
Of thine all-present power, and with the might
Of thine omnipotence, send in his aid
Thy unseen Angels forth, that potently
And royally against all enemies
He may endure and triumph! Bless the land
O'er which he is appointed; bless thou it
With the waters of the firmament, the springs
Of the low-lying deep, the fruits which Sun
And Moon mature for man, the precious stores
Of the eternal hills, and all the gifts
Of Earth, its wealth and fulness!
Then he took
Pelayo's hand, and on his finger placed
The mystic circlet. . . With this ring, O Prince,
To our dear Spain, who like a widow now
Mourneth in desolation, I thee wed:
For weal or woe thou takest her, till death
Dispart the union: Be it blest to her,
To thee, and to thy seed!
Thus when he ceased,
He gave the awaited signal. Roderick brought
The buckler: Eight for strength and stature chosen
Came to their honour'd office: Round the shield
Standing, they lower it for the Chieftain's feet,
Then, slowly raised upon their shoulders, lift
The steady weight. Erect Pelayo stands,
And thrice he brandishes the burnish'd sword,
While Urban to the assembled people cries,
Spaniards, behold your King! The multitude
Then sent forth all their voice with glad acclaim,
Raising the loud *Real;* thrice did the word
Ring through the air, and echo from the walls
Of Cangas. Far and wide the thundering shout,
Rolling among reduplicating rocks,
Peal'd o'er the hills, and up the mountain vales.
The wild ass starting in the forest glade
Ran to the covert; the affrighted wolf
Skulk'd through the thicket to a closer brake;
The sluggish bear, awaken'd in his den,
Roused up and answer'd with a sullen growl,
Low-breathed and long; and at the uproar scared,
The brooding eagle from her nest took wing.

Heroes and Chiefs of old! and ye who bore
Firm to the last your part in that dread strife,
When Julian and Witiza's viler race
Betray'd their country, hear ye from yon Heaven
The joyful acclamation which proclaims
That Spain is born again! O ye who died
In that disastrous field, and ye who fell
Embracing with a martyr's love your death
Amid the flames of Auria; and all ye
Victims innumerable, whose cries unheard
On earth, but heard in Heaven, from all the land
Went up for vengeance; not in vain ye cry
Before the eternal throne! . . Rest innocent blood!
Vengeance is due, and vengeance will be given,
Rest innocent blood! The appointed age is come!
The star that harbingers a glorious day
Hath risen! Lo there the Avenger stands! Lo there
He brandishes the avenging sword! Lo there
The avenging banner spreads its argent field
Refulgent with auspicious light! . . Rejoice,
O Leon, for thy banner is displayed,
Rejoice with all thy mountains, and thy vales
And streams! And thou, O Spain, through all thy realms,
For thy deliverance cometh! Even now,
As from all sides the miscreant hosts move on; . .
From southern Betis; from the western lands,
Where through redundant vales smooth Minho flows,
And Douro pours through vine-clad hills the wealth
Of Leon's gathered waters; from the plains
Burgensian, in old time Vardulia call'd,
But in their castellated strength ere long
To be design'd Castille, a deathless name;
From midland regions where Toledo reigns
Proud city on her royal eminence,
And Tagus bends his sickle round the scene
Of Roderick's fall; from rich Rioja's fields;
Dark Ebro's shores; the walls of Salduba,
Seat of the Sedetanians old, by Rome
Caesarian and August denominate,
Now Zaragoza, in this later time
Above all cities of the earth renown'd
For duty perfectly perform'd; . . East, West
And South, where'er their gather'd multitudes
Urged by the speed of vigorous tyranny,
With more than with commeasurable strength
Haste to prevent the danger, crush the hopes
Of rising Spain, and rivet round her neck
The eternal yoke, . . the ravenous fowls of heaven
Flock there presentient of their food obscene,
Following the accursed armies, whom too well
They know their purveyors long. Pursue their march,
Ominous attendants! Ere the moon hath fill'd
Her horns, these purveyors shall become the prey,

And ye on Moorish not on Christian flesh
Wearying your beaks, shall clog your scaly feet
With foreign gore. Soon will ye learn to know,
Followers and harbingers of blood, the flag
Of Leon where it bids you to your feast!
Terror and flight shall with that flag go forth,
And Havoc and the Dogs of War and Death.
Thou Covadonga with the tainted stream
Of Deva, and this now rejoicing vale,
Soon its primitial triumphs wilt behold!
Nor shall the glories of the noon be less
Than such miraculous promise of the dawn:
Witness Clavijo, where the dreadful cry
Of Santiago, then first heard, o'er-power'd
The Akbar, and that holier name blasphemed
By misbelieving lips! Simancas, thou
Be witness! And do ye your record bear,
Tolosan mountains, where the Almohade
Beheld his myriads scatter'd and destroy'd,
Like locusts swept before the stormy North!
Thou too, Salado, on that later day
When Africa received her final foil,
And thy swoln stream incarnadined, roll'd back
The invaders to the deep, . . there shall they toss
Till on their native Mauritanian shore
The waves shall cast their bones to whiten there.

XIX. RODERICK AND RUSILLA

When all had been perform'd, the royal Goth
Look'd up towards the chamber in the tower
Where, gazing on the multitude below,
Alone Rusilla stood. He met her eye,
For it was singling him amid the crowd;
Obeying then the hand which beckon'd him,
He went with heart prepared, nor shrinking now,
But arm'd with self-approving thoughts that hour.
Entering in tremulous haste, he closed the door,
And turn'd to clasp her knees; but lo, she spread
Her arms, and catching him in close embrace,
Fell on his neck, and cried, My Son, my Son! . .
Ere long, controlling that first agony
With effort of strong will, backward she bent,
And gazing on his head now shorn and grey,
And on his furrow'd countenance, exclaim'd,
Still, still, my Roderick! the same noble mind!
The same heroic heart! Still, still, my Son! . .
Changed, . . yet not wholly fallen, . . not wholly lost,
He cried, . . not wholly in the sight of Heaven
Unworthy, O my Mother, nor in thine!
She lock'd her arms again around his neck,
Saying, Lord, let me now depart in peace!
And bow'd her head again, and silently
Gave way to tears.

When that first force was spent,
And passion in exhaustment found relief, . .
I knew thee, said Rusilla, when the dog
Rose from my feet, and lick'd his master's hand.
All flash'd upon me then; the instinctive sense
That goes unerringly where reason fails, . .
The voice, the eye, . . a mother's thoughts are quick, . .
Miraculous as it seem'd, . . Siverian's tale, . .
Florinda's, . . every action, . . every word, . .
Each strengthening each, and all confirming all,
Reveal'd thee, O my Son! but I restrain'd
My heart, and yielded to thy holier will
The thoughts which rose to tempt a soul not yet
Wean'd wholly from the world.
What thoughts? replied
Roderick. That I might see thee yet again
Such as thou wert, she answer'd; not alone
To Heaven and me restored, but to thyself, . .
Thy Crown, . . thy Country, . . all within thy reach;
Heaven so disposing all things, that the means
Which wrought the ill, might work the remedy.
Methought I saw thee once again the hope, . .
The strength, . . the pride of Spain! The miracle
Which I beheld made all things possible.
I know the inconstant people, how their mind,
With every breath of good or ill report,
Fluctuates, like summer corn before the breeze;
Quick in their hatred, quicker in their love,
Generous and hasty, soon would they redress
All wrongs of former obloquy. . . I thought
Of happiness restored, . . the broken heart
Heal'd, . . and Count Julian, for his daughter's sake,
Turning in thy behalf against the Moors
His powerful sword: . . all possibilities
That could be found or fancied, built a dream
Before me; such as easiest might illude
A lofty spirit train'd in palaces,
And not alone amid the flatteries
Of youth with thoughts of high ambition fed
When all is sunshine, but through years of woe,
When sorrow sanctified their use, upheld
By honourable pride and earthly hopes.
I thought I yet might nurse upon my knee
Some young Theodofred, and see in him
Thy Father's image and thine own renew'd,
And love to think the little hand which there
Play'd with the bauble, should in after days
Wield the transmitted sceptre; . . that through him
The ancient seed should be perpetuate, . .
That precious seed revered so long, desired
So dearly, and so wondrously preserved.

Nay, he replied, Heaven hath not with its bolts
Scathed the proud summit of the tree, and left

The trunk unflaw'd; ne'er shall it clothe its boughs
Again, nor push again its scyons forth,
Head, root, and branch, all mortified alike! . .
Long ere these locks were shorn had I cut off
The thoughts of royalty! Time might renew
Their growth, as for Manoah's captive son,
And I too on the miscreant race, like him,
Might prove my strength regenerate; but the hour,
When, in its second best nativity,
My soul was born again through grace, this heart
Died to the world. Dreams such as thine pass now
Like evening clouds before me; if I think
How beautiful they seem, 'tis but to feel
How soon they fade, how fast the night shuts in.
But in that World to which my hopes look on,
Time enters not, nor Mutability;
Beauty and goodness are unfading there;
Whatever there is given us to enjoy,
That we enjoy for ever, still the same. . .
Much might Count Julian's sword achieve for Spain
And me, but more will his dear daughter's soul
Effect in Heaven; and soon will she be there
An Angel at the throne of Grace, to plead
In his behalf and mine.
I knew thy heart,
She answer'd, and subdued the vain desire.
It was the World's last effort. Thou hast chosen
The better part. Yes, Roderick, even on earth
There is a praise above the monarch's fame,
A higher, holier, more enduring praise,
And this will yet be thine!
O tempt me not,
Mother! he cried; nor let ambition take
That specious form to cheat us! What but this,
Fallen as I am, have I to offer Heaven?
The ancestral sceptre, public fame, content
Of private life, the general good report,
Power, reputation, happiness, . . whate'er
The heart of man desires to constitute
His earthly weal, . . unerring Justice claim'd
In forfeiture. I with submitted soul
Bow to the righteous law and kiss the rod.
Only while thus submitted, suffering thus, . .
Only while offering up that name on earth,
Perhaps in trial offer'd to my choice,
Could I present myself before thy sight;
Thus only could endure myself, or fix
My thoughts upon that fearful pass, where Death
Stands in the Gate of Heaven! . . Time passes on,
The healing work of sorrow is complete;
All vain desires have long been weeded out,
All vain regrets subdued; the heart is dead,
The soul is ripe and eager for her birth.
Bless me, my Mother! and come when it will
The inevitable hour, we die in peace.

So saying, on her knees he bow'd his head;
She raised her hands to Heaven and blest her child;
Then bending forward, as he rose, embraced
And clasped him to her heart, and cried, Once more
Theodofred, with pride behold thy son!

XX. THE MOORISH CAMP

The times are big with tidings; every hour
From east and west and south the breathless scouts
Bring swift alarums in; the gathering foe,
Advancing from all quarters to one point,
Close their wide crescent. Nor was aid of fear
To magnify their numbers needed now,
They came in myriads. Africa had pour'd
Fresh shoals upon the coast of wretched Spain;
Lured from their hungry deserts to the scene
Of spoil, like vultures to the battle-field,
Fierce, unrelenting, habited in crimes,
Like bidden guests the mirthful ruffians flock
To that free feast which in their Prophet's name
Rapine and Lust proclaim'd. Nor were the chiefs
Of victory less assured, by long success
Elate, and proud of that o'erwhelming strength,
Which, surely they believed, as it had roll'd
Thus far uncheck'd would roll victorious on,
Till, like the Orient, the subjected West
Should bow in reverence at Mahommed's name;
And pilgrims, from remotest Arctic shores,
Tread with religious feet the burning sands
Of Araby, and Mecca's stony soil.
Proud of his part in Roderick's overthrow,
Their leader Abulcacem came, a man
Immitigable, long in war renown'd.
Here Magued comes, who on the conquered walls
Of Cordoba, by treacherous fear betray'd,
Planted the moony standard: Ibrahim here,
He, who by Genil and in Darro's vales,
Had for the Moors the fairest portion won
Of all their spoils, fairest and best maintain'd,
And to the Alpuxarras given in trust
His other name, through them preserved in song.
Here too Alcahman, vaunting his late deeds
At Auria, all her children by the sword
Cut off, her bulwarks rased, her towers laid low,
Her dwellings by devouring flames consumed,
Bloody and hard of heart, he little ween'd,
Vain-boastful chief! that from those fatal flames
The fire of retribution had gone forth
Which soon should wrap him round.
The renegades
Here too were seen, Ebba and Sisibert;
A spurious brood, but of their parent's crimes
True heirs, in guilt begotten, and in ill
Train'd up. The same unnatural rage that turn'd

Their swords against their country, made them seek,
Unmindful of their wretched mother's end,
Pelayo's life. No enmity is like
Domestic hatred. For his blood they thirst,
As if that sacrifice might satisfy
Witiza's guilty ghost, efface the shame
Of their adulterous birth, and one crime more
Crowning a hideous course, emancipate
Thenceforth their spirits from all earthly fear.
This was their only care: but other thoughts
Were rankling in that elder villain's mind,
Their kinsman Orpas, he of all the crew
Who in this fatal visitation fell,
The foulest and the falsest wretch that e'er
Renounced his baptism. From his cherish'd views
Of royalty cut off, he coveted
Count Julian's wide domains, and hopeless now
To gain them through the daughter, laid his toils
Against the father's life, . . the instrument
Of his ambition first, and now design'd
Its victim. To this end with cautious hints,
At favouring season ventured, he possess'd
The leader's mind; then, subtly fostering
The doubts himself had sown, with bolder charge
He bade him warily regard the Count,
Lest underneath an outward show of faith
The heart uncircumcised were Christian still:
Else, wherefore had Florinda not obey'd
Her dear loved sire's example, and embraced
The saving truth? Else, wherefore was her hand,
Plighted to him so long, so long withheld,
Till she had found a fitting hour to fly
With that audacious Prince, who now in arms,
Defied the Caliph's power; . . for who could doubt
That in his company she fled, perhaps
The mover of his flight? What if the Count
Himself had plann'd the evasion which he feign'd
In sorrow to condemn? What if she went
A pledge assured, to tell the mountaineers
That when they met the Musselmen in the heat
Of fight, her father passing to their side
Would draw the victory with him? . . Thus he breathed
Fiend-like in Abulcacem's ear his schemes
Of murderous malice; and the course of things,
Ere long, in part approving his discourse,
Aided his aim, and gave his wishes weight.
For scarce on the Asturian territory
Had they set foot, when, with the speed of fear,
Count Eudon, nothing doubting that their force
Would like a flood sweep all resistance down,
Hasten'd to plead his merits; . . he alone,
Found faithful in obedience through reproach
And danger, when the madden'd multitude

Hurried their chiefs along, and high and low
With one infectious frenzy seized, provoked
The invincible in arms. Pelayo led
The raging crew, . . he doubtless the prime spring
Of all these perilous movements; and 'twas said
He brought the assurance of a strong support,
Count Julian's aid, for in his company
From Cordoba, Count Julian's daughter came.

Thus Eudon spake before the assembled chiefs;
When instantly a stern and wrathful voice
Replied, I know Pelayo never made
That senseless promise! He who raised the tale
Lies foully; but the bitterest enemy
That ever hunted for Pelayo's life
Hath never with the charge of falsehood touch'd
His name.
The Baron had not recognized
Till then, beneath the turban's shadowing folds,
Julian's swart visage, where the fiery skies
Of Africa, through many a year's long course,
Had set their hue inburnt. Something he sought
In quick excuse to say of common fame,
Lightly believed and busily diffused,
And that no enmity had moved his speech
Repeating rumour's tale. Julian replied,
Count Eudon, neither for thyself nor me
Excuse is needed here. The path I tread
Is one wherein there can be no return,
No pause, no looking back! A choice like mine
For time and for eternity is made,
Once and for ever! and as easily
The breath of vain report might build again
The throne which my just vengeance overthrew,
As in the Caliph and his Captain's mind
Affect the opinion of my well-tried truth.
The tidings which thou givest me of my child
Touch me more vitally; bad though they be,
A secret apprehension of aught worse
Makes me with joy receive them.
Then the Count
To Abulcacem turn'd his speech, and said,
I pray thee, Chief, give me a messenger
By whom I may to this unhappy child
Dispatch a father's bidding, such as yet
May win her back. What I would say requires
No veil of privacy; before ye all
The errand shall be given.
Boldly he spake,
Yet wary in that show of open truth,
For well he knew what dangers girt him round
Amid the faithless race. Blind with revenge,
For them in madness had he sacrificed
His name, his baptism, and his native land,
To feel, still powerful as he was, that life
Hung on their jealous favour. But his heart
Approved him now, where love, too long restrain'd,
Resumed its healing influence, leading him
Right on with no misgiving. Chiefs, he said,

Hear me, and let your wisdom judge between
Me and Prince Orpas ! . . Known it is to all,
Too well, what mortal injury provoked
My spirit to that vengeance which your aid
So signally hath given. A covenant
We made when first our purpose we combined,
That he should have Florinda for his wife,
My only child, so should she be, I thought,
Revenged and honour'd best. My word was given
Truly, nor did I cease to use all means
Of counsel or command, entreating her
Sometimes with tears, seeking sometimes with threats
Of an offended father's curse to enforce
Obedience ; that, she said, the Christian law
Forbade, moreover she had vow'd herself
A servant to the Lord. In vain I strove
To win her to the Prophet's saving faith,
Using perhaps a rigour to that end
Beyond permitted means, and to my heart,
Which loved her dearer than its own life-blood,
Abhorrent. Silently she suffer'd all,
Or when I urged her with most vehemence,
Only replied, I knew her fix'd resolve,
And craved my patience but a little while
Till death should set her free. Touch'd as I was,
I yet persisted, till at length to escape
The ceaseless importunity, she fled :
And verily I fear'd until this hour,
My rigour to some fearfuller resolve
Than flight, had driven my child. Chiefs, I appeal
To each and all, and Orpas to thyself
Especially, if, having thus essay'd
All means that law and nature have allow'd
To bend her will, I may not rightfully
Hold myself free, that promise being void
Which cannot be fulfill'd.
Thou sayest then,
Orpas replied, that from her false belief
Her stubborn opposition drew its force
I should have thought that from the ways corrupt
Of these idolatrous Christians, little care
Might have sufficed to wean a duteous child,
The example of a parent so beloved
Leading the way ; and yet I will not doubt
Thou didst enforce with all sincerity
And holy zeal upon thy daughter's mind
The truths of Islam.
Julian knit his brow,
And scowling on the insidious renegade
He answered, By what reasoning my poor mind
Was from the old idolatry reclaim'd,
None better knows than Seville's mitred chief,
Who first renouncing errors which he taught,
Led me his follower to the Prophet's pale.
Thy lessons I repeated as I could ;
Of graven images, unnatural vows,
False records, fabling creeds, and juggling priests,
Who, making sanctity the cloak of sin,
Laugh'd at the fools on whose credulity
They fatten'd. To these arguments, whose worth
Prince Orpas, least of all men, should impeach,
I added, like a soldier bred in arms,
And to the subtleties of schools unused,

The flagrant fact, that Heaven with victory,
Where'er they turn'd, attested and approved
The chosen Prophet's arms. If thou wert still
The mitred Metropolitan, and I
Some wretch of Arian or of Hebrew race,
Thy proper business then might be to pry,
And question me for lurking flaws of faith.
We Musselmen, Prince Orpas, live beneath
A wiser law, which with the iniquities
Of thine old craft, hath abrogated this
Its foulest practice!
As Count Julian ceased,
From underneath his black and gather'd brow
There went a look, which with these wary words
Bore to the heart of that false renegade
Their whole envenom'd meaning. Haughtily
Withdrawing then his alter'd eyes, he said,
Too much of this! return we to the sum
Of my discourse. Let Abulcacem say,
In whom the Caliph speaks, if with all faith
Having essay'd in vain all means to win
My child's consent, I may not hold henceforth
The covenant discharged.
The Moor replied,
Well hast thou said, and rightly may'st assure
Thy daughter that the Prophet's holy law
Forbids compulsion. Give thine errand now;
The messenger is here.
Then Julian said,
Go to Pelayo, and from him entreat
Admittance to my child, where'er she be.
Say to her, that her father solemnly
Annuls the covenant with Orpas pledged,
Nor with solicitations, nor with threats,
Will urge her more, nor from that liberty
Of faith restrain her, which the Prophet's law,
Liberal as Heaven from whence it came, to all
Indulges. Tell her that her father says
His days are number'd, and beseeches her
By that dear love, which from her infancy
Still he hath borne her, growing as she grew,
Nursed in our weal and strengthen'd in our woe,
She will not in the evening of his life
Leave him forsaken and alone. Enough
Of sorrow, tell her, have her injuries
Brought on her father's head; let not her act
Thus aggravate the burden. Tell her too,
That when he pray'd her to return, he wept
Profusely as a child; but bitterer tears
Than ever fell from childhood's eyes were those
Which traced his hardy cheeks.
With faltering voice
He spake, and after he had ceased from speech
His lip was quivering still. The Moorish chief
Then to the messenger his bidding gave.
Say, cried he, to these rebel infidels,
Thus Abulcacem in the Caliph's name
Exhorteth them: Repent and be forgiven!
Nor think to stop the dreadful storm of war,

Which conquering and to conquer must fulfil
Its destined circle, rolling eastward now
Back from the subjugated west, to sweep
Thrones and dominions down, till in the bond
Of unity all nations join, and Earth
Acknowledge, as she sees one Sun in heaven,
One God, one Chief, one Prophet, and one Law.
Jerusalem, the holy City, bows
To holier Mecca's creed; the Crescent shines
Triumphant o'er the eternal pyramids;
On the cold altars of the worshippers
Of Fire moss grows, and reptiles leave their slime;
The African idolatries are fallen,
And Europe's senseless gods of stone and wood
Have had their day. Tell these misguided men,
A moment for repentance yet is left,
And mercy the submitted neck will spare
Before the sword is drawn: but once unsheath'd,
Let Auria witness how that dreadful sword
Accomplisheth its work! They little know
The Moors who hope in battle to withstand
Their valour, or in flight escape their rage!
Amid our deserts we hunt down the birds
Of heaven, . . wings do not save them! Nor shall rocks,
And holds, and fastnesses, avail to save
These mountaineers. Is not the Earth the Lord's?
And we, his chosen people, whom he sends
To conquer and possess it in his name?

XXI. THE FOUNTAIN IN THE FOREST

The second eve had closed upon their march
Within the Asturian border, and the Moors
Had pitch'd their tents amid an open wood
Upon the mountain side. As day grew dim,
Their scatter'd fires shone with distincter light
Among the trees, above whose top the smoke
Diffused itself, and stain'd the evening sky.
Ere long the stir of occupation ceased,
And all the murmur of the busy host
Subsiding died away, as through the camp
The crier from a knoll proclaim'd the hour
For prayer appointed, and with sonorous voice,
Thrice in melodious modulation full,
Pronounced the highest name. There is no God
But God, he cried; there is no God but God!
Mahommed is the Prophet of the Lord!
Come ye to prayer! to prayer! The Lord is great!
There is no God but God! . . Thus he pronounced
His ritual form, mingling with holiest truth
The audacious name accurs'd. The multitude
Made their ablutions in the mountain stream
Obedient, then their faces to the earth
Bent in formality of easy prayer

An arrow's flight above that mountain stream
There was a little glade, where underneath
A long smooth mossy stone a fountain rose.
An oak grew near, and with its ample boughs
O'ercanopied the spring; its fretted roots
Emboss'd the bank, and on their tufted bark
Grew plants which love the moisture and the shade;
Short ferns, and longer leaves of wrinkled green
Which bent toward the spring, and when the wind
Made itself felt, just touch'd with gentle dip
The glassy surface, ruffled ne'er but then,
Save when a bubble rising from the depth
Burst, and with faintest circles mark'd its place,
Or if an insect skimm'd it with its wing,
Or when in heavier drops the gather'd rain
Fell from the oak's high bower. The mountain roe,
When, having drank there, he would bound across,
Drew up upon the bank his meeting feet,
And put forth half his force. With silent lapse
From thence through mossy banks the water stole,
Then murmuring hasten'd to the glen below.
Diana might have loved in that sweet spot
To take her noontide rest; and when she stoopt
Hot from the chase to drink, well pleased had seen
Her own bright crescent, and the brighter face
It crown'd, reflected there.
Beside that spring
Count Julian's tent was pitch'd upon the glade;
There his ablutions Moor-like he perform'd,
And Moor-like knelt in prayer, bowing his head
Upon the mossy bank. There was a sound
Of voices at the tent when he arose,
And lo! with hurried step a woman came
Toward him; rightly then his heart presaged,
And ere he could behold her countenance,
Florinda knelt, and with uplifted arms
Embraced her sire. He raised her from the ground,
Kiss'd her, and clasp'd her to his heart, and said,
Thou hast not then forsaken me, my child!
Howe'er the inexorable will of Fate
May in the world which is to come, divide
Our everlasting destinies, in this
Thou wilt not, O my child, abandon me!
And then with deep and interrupted voice,
Nor seeking to restrain his copious tears,
My blessing be upon thy head, he cried,
A father's blessing! Though all faiths were false,
It should not lose its worth! . . She lock'd her hands
Around his neck, and gazing in his face
Through streaming tears, exclaim'd, Oh never more,
Here or hereafter, never let us part!
And breathing then a prayer in silence forth,
The name of Jesus trembled on her tongue.

Whom hast thou there ? cried Julian, and drew back,
Seeing that near them stood a meagre man
In humble garb, who rested with raised hands
On a long staff, bending his head like one
Who when he hears the distant vesper-bell,
Halts by the way, and, all unseen of men,
Offers his homage in the eye of Heaven.
She answered, Let not my dear father frown
In anger on his child ! Thy messenger
Told me that I should be restrain'd no more
From liberty of faith, which the new law
Indulged to all; how soon my hour might come
I knew not, and although that hour will bring
Few terrors, yet methinks I would not be
Without a Christian comforter in death.

A Priest ! exclaimed the Count, and drawing back,
Stoopt for his turban that he might not lack
Some outward symbol of apostacy;
For still in war his wonted arms he wore,
Nor for the scymitar had changed the sword
Accustomed to his hand. He covered now
His short grey hair, and under the white folds
His swarthy brow, which gather'd as he rose,
Darken'd. Oh frown not thus ! Florinda said,
A kind and gentle counsellor is this,
One who pours balm into a wounded soul,
And mitigates the griefs he cannot heal.
I told him I had vow'd to pass my days
A servant of the Lord, yet that my heart,
Hearing the message of thy love, was drawn
With powerful yearnings back. Follow thy heart, . .
It answers to the call of duty here,
He said, nor canst thou better serve the Lord
Than at thy father's side.
Count Julian's brow,
While thus she spake, insensibly relax'd.
A Priest, cried he, and thus with even hand
Weigh vows and natural duty in the scale ?
In what old heresy hath he been train'd ?
Or in what wilderness hath he escaped
The domineering Prelate's fire and sword ?
Come hither, man, and tell me who thou art !

A sinner, Roderick, drawing nigh, replied;
Brought to repentance by the grace of God,
And trusting for forgiveness through the blood
Of Christ in humble hope.
A smile of scorn
Julian assumed, but merely from the lips
It came; for he was troubled while he gazed
On the strong countenance and thoughtful eye
Before him. A new law hath been proclaim'd,
Said he, which overthrows in its career
The Christian altars of idolatry.
What think'st thou of the Prophet ? . .
Roderick

Made answer, I am in the Moorish camp,
And he who asketh is a Musselman.
How then should I reply? . . Safely, rejoin'd
The renegade, and freely may'st thou speak
To all that Julian asks. Is not the yoke
Of Mecca easy, and its burden light? . .
Spain hath not found it so, the Goth replied,
And groaning, turn'd away his countenance.

Count Julian knit his brow, and stood awhile
Regarding him with meditative eye
In silence. Thou art honest too! he cried;
Why 'twas in quest of such a man as this
That the old Grecian search'd by lantern light
In open day the city's crowded streets,
So rare he deem'd the virtue. Honesty
And sense of natural duty in a Priest!
Now for a miracle, ye Saints of Spain!
I shall not pry too closely for the wires,
For, seeing what I see, ye have me now
In the believing mood!
O blessed Saints,
Florinda cried, 'tis from the bitterness,
Not from the hardness of the heart, he speaks!
Hear him! and in your goodness give the scoff
The virtue of a prayer! So saying, she raised
Her hands in fervent action clasp'd to Heaven:
Then as, still clasp'd, they fell, toward her sire
She turn'd her eyes, beholding him through tears.
The look, the gesture, and that silent woe,
Soften'd her father's heart, which in this hour
Was open to the influences of love.
Priest, thy vocation were a blessed one,
Said Julian, if its mighty power were used
To lessen human misery, not to swell
The mournful sum, already all-too-great.
If, as thy former counsel should imply,
Thou art not one who would for his craft's sake
Fret with corrosives and inflame the wound,
Which the poor sufferer brings to thee in trust
That thou with virtuous balm wilt bind it up, . .
If, as I think, thou art not one of those
Whose villainy makes honest men turn Moors,
Thou then wilt answer with unbiass'd mind
What I shall ask thee, and exorcise thus
The sick and feverish conscience of my child,
From inbred phantoms, fiend-like, which possess
Her innocent spirit. Children we are all
Of one great Father, in whatever clime
Nature or chance hath cast the seeds of life,
All tongues, all colours: neither after death
Shall we be sorted into languages
And tints, . . white, black, and tawny, Greek and Goth,
Northmen and offspring of hot Africa;
The All-Father, He in whom we live and move,
He the indifferent Judge of all, regards
Nations, and hues, and dialects alike;
According to their works shall they be judged,
When even-handed Justice in the scale
Their good and evil weighs. All creeds, I ween,
Agree in this, and hold it orthodox.

Roderick, perceiving here that Julian paused,
As if he waited for acknowledgement
Of that plain truth, in motion of assent
Inclined his brow complacently, and said,
Even so: What follows? . . This, resumed the Count,
That creeds like colours being but accident,
Are therefore in the scale imponderable; . .
Thou seest my meaning; . . that from every faith
As every clime, there is a way to Heaven,
And thou and I may meet in Paradise.

Oh grant it, God! cried Roderick, fervently,
And smote his breast. Oh grant it, gracious God!
Through the dear blood of Jesus, grant that he
And I may meet before the Mercy-throne!
That were a triumph of Redeeming Love,
For which admiring Angels would renew
Their hallelujahs through the choir of Heaven!
Man! quoth Count Julian, wherefore art thou moved
To this strange passion? I require of thee
Thy judgement, not thy prayers!
Be not displeased!
In gentle voice subdued the Goth replies;
A prayer, from whatsoever lips it flow,
By thine own rule should find the way to Heaven,
So that the heart in its sincerity
Straight forward breathe it forth. I, like thyself,
Am all untrain'd to subtleties of speech,
Nor competent of this great argument
Thou openest; and perhaps shall answer thee
Wide of the words, but to the purport home.
There are to whom the light of gospel truth
Hath never reach'd; of such I needs must deem
As of the sons of men who had their day
Before the light was given. But, Count, for those
Who, born amid the light, to darkness turn,
Wilful in error, . . I dare only say,
God doth not leave the unhappy soul without
An inward monitor, and till the grave
Open, the gate of mercy is not closed.

Priest-like! the renegade replied, and shook
His head in scorn. What is not in the craft
Is error, and for error there shall be
No mercy found in Him whom yet ye name
The Merciful!
Now God forbid, rejoin'd
The fallen King, that one who stands in need
Of mercy for his sins should argue thus
Of error! Thou hast said that thou and I,
Thou dying in name a Musselman, and I
A servant of the Cross, may meet in Heaven.
Time was when in our fathers' ways we walk'd
Regardlessly alike; faith being to each, . .
For so far thou hast reason'd rightly, . . like
Our country's fashion and our mother-tongue,

Of mere inheritance, . . no thing of choice
In judgement fix'd, nor rooted in the heart.
Me have the arrows of calamity
Sore stricken; sinking underneath the weight
Of sorrow, yet more heavily oppress'd
Beneath the burthen of my sins, I turn'd
In that dread hour to Him who from the Cross
Calls to the heavy-laden. There I found
Relief and comfort; there I have my hope,
My strength and my salvation; there, the grave
Ready beneath my feet, and Heaven in view,
I to the King of Terrors say, Come, Death, . .
Come quickly! Thou too wert a stricken deer,
Julian, . . God pardon the unhappy hand
That wounded thee! . . but whither didst thou go
For healing? Thou hast turn'd away from Him,
Who saith, Forgive as ye would be forgiven;
And that the Moorish sword might do thy work,
Received the creed of Mecca: with what fruit
For Spain, let tell her cities sack'd, her sons
Slaughter'd, her daughters than thine own dear child
More foully wrong'd, more wretched! For thyself,
Thou hast had thy fill of vengeance, and perhaps
The cup was sweet: but it hath left behind
A bitter relish! Gladly would thy soul
Forget the past; as little canst thou bear
To send into futurity thy thoughts:
And for this Now, what is it, Count, but fear . .
However bravely thou may'st bear thy front, . .
Danger, remorse, and stinging obloquy?
One only hope, one only remedy,
One only refuge yet remains. . . My life
Is at thy mercy, Count! Call, if thou wilt,
Thy men, and to the Moors deliver me!
Or strike thyself! Death were from any hand
A welcome gift; from thine, and in this cause,
A boon indeed! My latest words on earth
Should tell thee that all sins may be effaced,
Bid thee repent, have faith, and be forgiven!
Strike, Julian, if thou wilt, and send my soul
To intercede for thine, that we may meet,
Thou and thy child and I, beyond the grave.

Thus Roderick spake, and spread his arms as if
He offer'd to the sword his willing breast,
With looks of passionate persuasion fix'd
Upon the Count, who in his first access
Of anger, seem'd as though he would have call'd
His guards to seize the Priest. The attitude
Disarm'd him, and that fervent zeal sincere,
And more than both, the look and voice, which like
A mystery troubled him. Florinda too
Hung on his arm with both her hands, and cried,
O father, wrong him not! he speaks from God!

Life and salvation are upon his tongue!
Judge thou the value of that faith whereby,
Reflecting on the past, I murmur not,
And to the end of all look on with joy
Of hope assured!
Peace, innocent! replied
The Count, and from her hold withdrew his arm.
Then with a gather'd brow of mournfulness
Rather than wrath, regarding Roderick, said,
Thou preachest that all sins may be effaced:
Is there forgiveness, Christian, in thy creed
For Roderick's crime? . . For Roderick and for thee,
Count Julian, said the Goth, and as he spake
Trembled through every fibre of his frame,
The gate of Heaven is open. Julian threw
His wrathful hand aloft, and cried, Away!
Earth could not hold us both, nor can one Heaven
Contain my deadliest enemy and me!

My father, say not thus! Florinda cried;
I have forgiven him! I have pray'd for him!
For him, for thee, and for myself I pour
One constant prayer to Heaven! In passion then
She knelt, and bending back, with arms and face
Raised toward the sky, the supplicant exclaim'd,
Redeemer, heal his heart! It is the grief
Which festers there that hath bewilder'd him!
Save him, Redeemer! by thy precious death
Save, save him, O my God! Then on her face
She fell, and thus with bitterness pursued
In silent throes her agonizing prayer.

Afflict not thus thyself, my child, the Count
Exclaim'd; O dearest, be thou comforted;
Set but thy heart at rest, I ask no more!
Peace, dearest, peace! . . and weeping as he spake,
He knelt to raise her. Roderick also knelt;
Be comforted, he cried, and rest in faith
That God will hear thy prayers! they must be heard.
He who could doubt the worth of prayers like thine
May doubt of all things! Sainted as thou art
In sufferings here, this miracle will be
Thy work and thy reward!
Then raising her,
They seated her upon the fountain's brink,
And there beside her sate. The moon had risen,
And that fair spring lay blacken'd half in shade,
Half like a burnish'd mirror in her light.
By that reflected light Count Julian saw
That Roderick's face was bathed with tears, and pale
As monumental marble. Friend, said he,
Whether thy faith be fabulous, or sent
Indeed from Heaven, its dearest gift to man,
Thy heart is true: and had the mitred Priest
Of Seville been like thee, or hadst thou held

The place he fill'd; . . but this is idle talk, . .
Things are as they will be; and we, poor slaves,
Fret in the harness as we may, must drag
The Car of Destiny where'er she drives,
Inexorable and blind!
Oh wretched man!
Cried Roderick, if thou seekest to assuage
Thy wounded spirit with that deadly drug,
Hell's subtlest venom; look to thine own heart,
Where thou hast Will and Conscience to belie
This juggling sophistry, and lead thee yet
Through penitence to Heaven!
Whate'er it be
That governs us, in mournful tone the Count
Replied, Fate, Providence, or Allah's will,
Or reckless Fortune, still the effect the same,
A world of evil and of misery!
Look where we will we meet it; where-soe'er
We go we bear it with us. Here we sit
Upon the margin of this peaceful spring,
And oh! what volumes of calamity
Would be unfolded here, if either heart
Laid open its sad records! Tell me not
Of goodness! Either in some freak of power
This frame of things was fashion'd, then cast off
To take its own wild course, the sport of chance;
Or the bad Spirit o'er the Good prevails,
And in the eternal conflict hath arisen
Lord of the ascendant!
Rightly would'st thou say
Were there no world but this! the Goth replied.
The happiest child of earth that e'er was mark'd
To be the minion of prosperity,
Richest in corporal gifts and wealth of mind,
Honour and fame attending him abroad,
Peace and all dear domestic joys at home,
And sunshine till the evening of his days
Closed in without a cloud, . . even such a man
Would from the gloom and horror of his heart
Confirm thy fatal thought, were this world all!
Oh! who could bear the haunting mystery,
If death and retribution did not solve
The riddle, and to heavenliest harmony
Reduce the seeming chaos! . . Here we see
The water at its well-head; clear it is,
Not more transpicuous the invisible air;
Pure as an infant's thoughts; and here to life
And good directed all its uses serve.
The herb grows greener on its brink; sweet flowers
Bend o'er the stream that feeds their freshened roots;
The red-breast loves it for his wintry haunts;
And when the buds begin to open forth,
Builds near it with his mate their brooding nest;
The thirsty stag with widening nostrils there
Invigorated draws his copious draught;
And there amid its flags the wild-boar stands,
Nor suffering wrong nor meditating hurt.
Through woodlands wild and solitary fields
Unsullied thus it holds its bounteous course;

But when it reaches the resorts of men,
The service of the city there defiles
The tainted stream; corrupt and foul it flows
Through loathsome banks and o'er a bed impure,
Till in the sea, the appointed end to which
Through all its way it hastens, 'tis received,
And, losing all pollution, mingles there
In the wide world of waters. So is it
With the great stream of things, if all were seen;
Good the beginning, good the end shall be,
And transitory evil only make
The good end happier. Ages pass away,
Thrones fall, and nations disappear, and worlds
Grow old and go to wreck; the soul alone
Endures, and what she chuseth for herself,
The arbiter of her own destiny,
That only shall be permanent.
But guilt,
And all our suffering? said the Count. The Goth
Replied, Repentance taketh sin away,
Death remedies the rest. . . Soothed by the strain
Of such discourse, Julian was silent then,
And sate contemplating. Florinda too
Was calm'd: If sore experience may be thought
To teach the uses of adversity,
She said, alas! who better learn'd than I
In that sad school! Methinks if ye would know
How visitations of calamity
Affect the pious soul, 'tis shown ye there!
Look yonder at that cloud, which through the sky
Sailing alone, doth cross in her career
The rolling Moon! I watch'd it as it came,
And deem'd the deep opake would blot her beams;
But, melting like a wreath of snow, it hangs
In folds of wavy silver round, and clothes
The orb with richer beauties than her own,
Then passing, leaves her in her light serene.

Thus having said, the pious sufferer sate,
Beholding with fix'd eyes that lovely orb,
Till quiet tears confused in dizzy light
The broken moonbeams. They too by the toil
Of spirit, as by travail of the day
Subdued, were silent, yielding to the hour.
The silver cloud diffusing slowly pass'd,
And now into its airy elements
Resolved is gone; while through the azure depth
Alone in heaven the glorious Moon pursues
Her course appointed, with indifferent beams
Shining upon the silent hills around,
And the dark tents of that unholy host,
Who, all unconscious of impending fate,
Take their last slumber there. The camp is still;
The fires have moulder'd, and the breeze which stirs
The soft and snowy embers, just lays bare
At times a red and evanescent light,
Or for a moment wakes a feeble flame.
They by the fountain hear the stream below,

Whose murmurs, as the wind arose or fell,
Fuller or fainter reach the ear attuned.
And now the nightingale, not distant far,
Began her solitary song; and pour'd
To the cold moon a richer, stronger strain
Than that with which the lyric lark salutes
The new-born day. Her deep and thrilling song
Seem'd with its piercing melody to reach
The soul, and in mysterious unison
Blend with all thoughts of gentleness and love.
Their hearts were open to the healing power
Of nature; and the splendour of the night,
The flow of waters, and that sweetest lay
Came to them like a copious evening dew
Falling on vernal herbs which thirst for rain.

XXII. THE MOORISH COUNCIL

Thus they beside the fountain sate, of food
And rest forgetful, when a messenger
Summon'd Count Julian to the Leader's tent.
In council there at that late hour he found
The assembled Chiefs, on sudden tidings call'd
Of unexpected weight from Cordoba.
Jealous that Abdalaziz had assumed
A regal state, affecting in his court
The forms of Gothic sovereignty, the Moors,
Whom artful spirits of ambitious mould
Stirr'd up, had risen against him in revolt:
And he who late had in the Caliph's name
Ruled from the Ocean to the Pyrenees,
A mutilate and headless carcass now,
From pitying hands received beside the road
A hasty grave, scarce hidden there from dogs
And ravens, nor from wintry rains secure.
She, too, who in the wreck of Spain preserved
Her queenly rank, the wife of Roderick first,
Of Abdalaziz after, and to both
Alike unhappy, shared the ruin now
Her counsels had brought on; for she had led
The infatuate Moor, in dangerous vauntery,
To these aspiring forms, . . so should he gain
Respect and honour from the Musselmen,
She said, and that the obedience of the Goths
Follow'd the sceptre. In an evil hour
She gave the counsel, and in evil hour
He lent a willing ear; the popular rage
Fell on them both; and they to whom her name
Had been a mark for mockery and reproach,
Shudder'd with human horror at her fate.
Ayub was heading the wild anarchy;
But where the cement of authority
Is wanting, all things there are dislocate:
The mutinous soldiery, by every cry
Of rumour set in wild career, were driven
By every gust of passion, setting up
One hour, what in the impulse of the next,
Equally unreasoning, they destroy'd: thus all

Was in misrule where uproar gave the law,
And ere from far Damascus they could learn
The Caliph's pleasure, many a moon must pass.
What should be done? should Abulcacem march
To Cordoba, and in the Caliph's name
Assume the power which to his rank in arms
Rightly devolved, restoring thus the reign
Of order? or pursue with quicken'd speed
The end of this great armament, and crush
Rebellion first, then to domestic ills
Apply his undivided mind and force
Victorious? What in this emergency
Was Julian's counsel, Abulcacem ask'd.
Should they accomplish soon their enterprize?
Or would the insurgent infidels prolong
The contest, seeking by protracted war
To weary them, and trusting in the strength
Of these wild hills?
Julian replied, The Chief
Of this revolt is wary, resolute,
Of approved worth in war: a desperate part
He for himself deliberately hath chosen,
Confiding in the hereditary love
Borne to him by these hardy mountaineers,
A love which his own noble qualities
Have strengthen'd so that every heart is his.
When ye can bring them to the open proof
Of battle, ye will find them in his cause
Lavish of life; but well they know the strength
Of their own fastnesses, the mountain paths
Impervious to pursuit, the vantages
Of rock, and pass, and woodland, and ravine;
And hardly will ye tempt them to forego
These natural aids wherein they put their trust
As in their stubborn spirit, each alike
Deem'd by themselves invincible, and so
By Roman found and Goth . . beneath whose sway
Slowly persuaded rather than subdued
They came, and still through every change retain'd
Their manners obstinate and barbarous speech.
My counsel, therefore, is, that we secure
With strong increase of force the adjacent posts,
And chiefly Gegio, leaving them so mann'd
As may abate the hope of enterprize
Their strength being told. Time in a strife like this
Becomes the ally of those who trust in him:
Make then with Time your covenant. Old feuds
May disunite the chiefs: some may be gain'd
By fair entreaty, others by the stroke
Of nature, or of policy, cut off.
This was the counsel which in Cordoba
I offer'd Abdalaziz: in ill hour
Rejecting it, he sent upon this war
His father's faithful friend! Dark are the ways
Of destiny! had I been at his side
Old Muza would not now have mourn'd his age
Left childless, nor had Ayub dared defy
The Caliph's represented power. The case
Calls for thine instant presence, with the weight
Of thy legitimate authority.

Julian, said Orpas, turning from beneath
His turban to the Count a crafty eye,
Thy daughter is return'd; doth she not bring
Some tidings of the movements of the foe?
The Count replied, When child and parent meet
First reconciled from discontents which wrung
The hearts of both, ill should their converse be
Of warlike matters! There hath been no time
For such inquiries, neither should I think
To ask her touching that for which I know
She hath neither eye nor thought.
There was a time,
Orpas with smile malignant thus replied,
When in the progress of the Caliph's arms
Count Julian's daughter had an interest
Which touch'd her nearly! But her turn is served,
And hatred of Prince Orpas may beget
Indifference to the cause. Yet Destiny
Still guideth to the service of the faith
The wayward heart of woman; for as one
Delivered Roderick to the avenging sword,
So hath another at this hour betray'd
Pelayo to his fall. His sister came
At nightfall to my tent a fugitive.
She tells me that on learning our approach
The rebel to a cavern in the hills
Had sent his wife and children, and with them
Those of his followers, thinking there conceal'd
They might be safe. She, moved, by injuries
Which stung her spirit, on the way escaped,
And for revenge will guide us. In reward
She asks her brother's forfeiture of lands
In marriage with Numacian: something too
Touching his life, that for her services
It might be spared, she said; .. an afterthought
To salve decorum, and if conscience wake
Serve as a sop: but when the sword shall smite
Pelayo and his dangerous race, I ween
That a thin kerchief will dry all the tears
The Lady Guisla sheds!
'Tis the old taint!
Said Julian mournfully; from her mother's womb
She brought the inbred wickedness which now
In ripe infection blossoms. Woman, woman,
Still to the Goths art thou the instrument
Of overthrow; thy virtue and thy vice
Fatal alike to them!
Say rather, cried
The insidious renegade, that Allah thus
By woman punisheth the idolatry
Of those who raise a woman to the rank
Of godhead, calling on their Mary's name
With senseless prayers. In vain shall they invoke
Her trusted succour now! like silly birds
By fear betray'd, they fly into the toils;
And this Pelayo, who in lengthen'd war
Baffling our force, has thought perhaps to reign
Prince of the Mountains, when we hold his wife
And offspring at our mercy, must himself
Come to the lure.

Enough, the Leader said;
This unexpected work of favouring Fate
Opens an easy way to our desires,
And renders farther counsel needless now.
Great is the Prophet whose protecting power
Goes with the faithful forth! the rebels' days
Are number'd; Allah hath deliver'd them
Into our hands!
So saying he arose;
The Chiefs withdrew, Orpas alone remain'd
Obedient to his indicated will.
The event, said Abulcacem, hath approved
Thy judgement in all points; his daughter comes
At the first summons, even as thou saidst;
Her errand with the insurgents done, she brings
Their well-concerted project back, a safe
And unexpected messenger; . . the Moor, . .
The shallow Moor, . . must see and not perceive;
Must hear and understand not; yea must bear,
Poor easy fool, to serve their after mirth,
A part in his own undoing! But just Heaven
With this unlook'd-for incident hath marr'd
Their complots, and the sword shall cut this web
Of treason.
Well, the renegade replied,
Thou knowest Count Julian's spirit, quick in wiles,
In act audacious. Baffled now, he thinks
Either by instant warning to apprize
The rebels of their danger, or preserve
The hostages when fallen into our power,
Till secret craft contrive, or open force
Win their enlargement. Haply too he dreams
Of Cordoba, the avenger and the friend
Of Abdalaziz, in that cause to arm
Moor against Moor, preparing for himself
The victory o'er the enfeebled conquerors.
Success in treason hath embolden'd him,
And power but serves him for fresh treachery, false
To Roderick first, and to the Caliph now.

The guilt, said Abulcacem, is confirm'd,
The sentence pass'd; all that is now required
Is to strike sure and safely. He hath with him
A veteran force devoted to his will,
Whom to provoke were perilous; nor less
Of peril lies there in delay: what course
Between these equal dangers should we steer?

They have been train'd beneath him in the wars
Of Africa, the renegade replied;
Men are they who, from their youth up, have found
Their occupation and their joy in arms;
Indifferent to the cause for which they fight,
But faithful to their leader, who hath won
By licence largely given, yet temper'd still
With exercise of firm authority,
Their whole devotion. Vainly should we seek

By proof of Julian's guilt to pacify
Such martial spirits, unto whom all creeds
And countries are alike; but take away
The head, and forthwith their fidelity
Goes at the market price. The act must be
Sudden and secret; poison is too slow.
Thus it may best be done; the Mountaineers,
Doubtless, ere long will rouse us with some spur
Of sudden enterprize: at such a time
A trusty minister approaching him
May smite him, so that all shall think the spear
Comes from the hostile troops.
Right counsellor!
Cried Abulcacem, thou shalt have his lands,
The proper meed of thy fidelity:
His daughter thou may'st take or leave. Go now
And find a faithful instrument to put
Our purpose in effect! . . And when 'tis done,
The Moor, as Orpas from the tent withdrew,
Muttering pursued, . . look for a like reward
Thyself! that restless head of wickedness
In the grave will brood no treasons. Other babes
Scream when the Devil, as they spring to life,
Infects them with his touch; but thou didst stretch
Thine arms to meet him, and like mother's milk
Suck the congenial evil! Thou hast tried
Both laws, and were there aught to gain, would st prove
A third as readily; but when thy sins
Are weigh'd, 'twill be against an empty scale,
And neither Prophet will avail thee then!

XXIII. THE VALE OF COVADONGA

THE camp is stirring, and ere day hath dawn'd
The tents are struck. Early they rise whom hope
Awakens, and they travel fast with whom
She goes companion of the way. By noon
Hath Abulcacem in his speed attain'd
The vale of Cangas. Well the trusty scouts
Observe his march, and fleet as mountain roes,
From post to post with instantaneous speed
The warning bear: none else is nigh; the vale
Hath been deserted, and Pelayo's hall
Is open to the foe, who on the tower
Hoist their white signal-flag. In Sella's stream
The misbelieving multitudes perform,
With hot and hasty hand, their noontide rite,
Then hurryingly repeat the Impostor's prayer.
Here they divide; the Chieftain halts with half
The host, retaining Julian and his men,
Whom where the valley widen'd he disposed,
Liable to first attack, that so the deed
Of murder plann'd with Orpas might be done.
The other force the Moor Alcahman led
Whom Guisla guided up Pionia's stream

Eastward to Soto. Ibrahim went with him,
Proud of Granada's snowy heights subdued,
And boasting of his skill in mountain war;
Yet sure he deem'd an easier victory
Awaited him this day. Little, quoth he,
Weens the vain Mountaineer who puts his trust
In dens and rocky fastnesses, how close
Destruction is at hand! Belike he thinks
The Humma's happy wings have shadow'd him,
And therefore Fate with royalty must crown
His chosen head! Pity the scymitar
With its rude edge so soon should interrupt
The pleasant dream!
There can be no escape
For those who in the cave seek shelter, cried
Alcahman; yield they must, or from their holes
Like bees we smoke them out. The Chief perhaps
May reign awhile King of the wolves and bears,
Till his own subjects hunt him down, or kites
And crows divide what hunger may have left
Upon his ghastly limbs. Happier for him
That destiny should this day to our hands
Deliver him; short would be his sufferings then;
And we right joyfully should in one hour
Behold our work accomplish'd, and his race
Extinct.
Thus these in mockery and in thoughts
Of bloody triumph, to the future blind,
Indulged the scornful vein; nor deem'd that they
Whom to the sword's unsparing edge they doom'd,
Even then in joyful expectation pray'd
To Heaven for their approach, and at their post
Prepared, were trembling with excess of hope.
Here in these mountain straits the Mountaineer
Had felt his country's strength insuperable;
Here he had pray'd to see the Musselman
With all his myriads; therefore had he look'd
To Covadonga as a sanctuary
Apt for concealment, easy of defence;
And Guisla's flight, though to his heart it sent
A pang more poignant for their mother's sake,
Yet did it further in its consequence
His hope and project, surer than decoy
Well-laid, or best-concerted stratagem.
That sullen and revengeful mind, he knew,
Would follow to the extremity of guilt
Its long fore-purposed shame: the toils were laid,
And she who by the Musselmen full sure
Thought on her kindred her revenge to wreak,
Led the Moors in.
Count Pedro and his son
Were hovering with the main Asturian force
In the wider vale to watch occasion there,
And with hot onset when the alarm began
Pursue the vantage. In the fated straits

Of Deva had the King disposed the rest :
Amid the hanging woods, and on the cliffs,
A long mile's length on either side its bed,
They lay. The lever and the axe and saw
Had skilfully been plied ; and trees and stones,
A dread artillery, ranged on crag and shelf
And steep descent, were ready at the word
Precipitate to roll resistless down.
The faithful maiden not more wistfully
Looks for the day that brings her lover home ; . .
Scarce more impatiently the horse endures
The rein, when loud and shrill the hunter's horn
Rings in his joyous ears, than at their post
The Mountaineers await their certain prey ;
Yet mindful of their Prince's order, oft
And solemnly enforced, with eagerness
Subdued by minds well-master'd, they expect
The appointed signal.
Hand must not be raised,
Foot stirr'd, nor voice be utter'd, said the Chief,
Till the word pass : impatience would mar all.
God hath deliver'd over to your hands
His enemies and ours, so we but use
The occasion wisely. Not till the word pass
From man to man transmitted, ' In the name
Of God, for Spain and Vengeance ! ' let a hand
Be lifted ; on obedience all depends,
Their march below with noise of horse and foot
And haply with the clang of instruments,
Might drown all other signal, this is sure ;
But wait it calmly ; it will not be given
Till the whole line hath enter'd in the toils.
Comrades, be patient, so shall none escape
Who once set foot within these straits of death.
Thus had Pelayo on the Mountaineers
With frequent and impressive charge enforced
The needful exhortation. This alone
He doubted, that the Musselmen might see
The perils of the vale, and warily
Forbear to enter. But they thought to find,
As Guisla told, the main Asturian force
Seeking concealment there, no other aid
Soliciting from these their native hills ;
And that the babes and women having fallen
In thraldom, they would lay their weapons down,
And supplicate forgiveness for their sake.
Nor did the Moors perceive in what a strait
They enter'd ; for the morn had risen o'ercast,
And when the Sun had reach'd the height of heaven,
Dimly his pale and beamless orb was seen
Moving through mist. A soft and gentle rain,
Scarce heavier than the summer's evening dew,
Descended, . . through so still an atmosphere,
That every leaf upon the moveless trees
Was studded o'er with rain-drops, bright and full,

None falling till from its own weight o'erswoln
The motion came.
Low on the mountain side
The fleecy vapour hung, and in its veil
With all their dreadful preparations wrapt
The Mountaineers; . . in breathless hope they lay,
Some blessing God in silence for the power
This day vouchsafed; others with fervency
Of prayer and vow invoked the Mother-Maid,
Beseeching her that in this favouring hour
She would be strongly with them. From below
Meantime distinct they heard the passing tramp
Of horse and foot, continuous as the sound
Of Deva's stream, and barbarous tongues commixt
With laughter, and with frequent shouts, . . for all
Exultant came, expecting sure success;
Blind wretches over whom the ruin hung!

They say, quoth one, that though the Prophet's soul
Doth with the black-eyed Houris bathe in bliss,
Life hath not left his body, which bears up
By its miraculous power the holy tomb,
And holds it at Medina in the air
Buoyant between the temple's floor and roof:
And there the Angels fly to him with news
From East, West, North, and South, of what befalls
His faithful people. If when he shall hear
The tale of this day's work, he should for joy
Forget that he is dead, and walk abroad, . .
It were as good a miracle as when
He sliced the moon! Sir Angel hear me now,
Whoe'er thou be'st who are about to speed
From Spain to Araby! when thou hast got
The Prophet's ear, be sure thou tellest him
How bravely Ghauleb did his part to-day,
And with what special reverence he alone
Desired thee to commend him to his grace! . .
Fie on thee, scoffer that thou art! replied
His comrade; thou wilt never leave these gibes
Till some commission'd arrow through the teeth
Shall nail the offending tongue. Hast thou not heard
How when our clay is leaven'd first with life,
The ministering Angel brings it from that spot
Whereon 'tis written in the eternal book
That soul and body must their parting take,
And earth to earth return? How knowest thou
But that the Spirit who compounded thee,
To distant Syria from this very vale
Bore thy component dust, and Azrael here
Awaits thee at this hour? . . Little thought he

Who spake, that in that valley at that hour
One death awaited both! Thus they pursued
Toward the cave their inauspicious way.
Weak childhood there and ineffective age
In the chambers of the rock were placed secure;
But of the women, all whom with the babes
Maternal care detain'd not, were aloft
To aid in the destruction; by the side
Of fathers, brethren, husbands, station'd there,
They watch and pray. Pelayo in the cave
With the venerable Primate took his post.
Ranged on the rising cliffs on either hand,
Vigilant sentinels with eye intent
Observe his movements, when to take the word
And pass it forward. He in arms complete
Stands in the portal: a stern majesty
Reign'd in his countenance severe that hour,
And in his eye a deep and dreadful joy
Shone, as advancing up the vale he saw
The Moorish banners. God hath blinded them!
He said; the measure of their crimes is full!
O Vale of Deva, famous shalt thou be
From this day forth for ever; and to these
Thy springs shall unborn generations come
In pilgrimage, and hallow with their prayers
The cradle of their native monarchy!

There was a stirring in the air, the sun
Prevail'd, and gradually the brightening mist
Began to rise and melt. A jutting crag
Upon the right projected o'er the stream,
Not farther from the cave than a strong hand
Expert, with deadly aim, might cast the spear,
Or a strong voice, pitch'd to full compass, make
Its clear articulation heard distinct.
A venturous dalesman, once ascending there
To rob the eagle's nest, had fallen, and hung
Among the heather, wondrously preserved:
Therefore had he with pious gratitude
Placed on that overhanging brow a Cross,
Tall as the mast of some light fisher's skiff,
And from the vale conspicuous. As the Moors
Advanced, the Chieftain in the van was seen,
Known by his arms, and from the crag a voice
Pronounced his name, . . Alcahman! hoa, look up,
Alcahman! As the floating mist drew up,
It had divided there, and open'd round
The Cross; part clinging to the rock beneath,
Hovering and waving part in fleecy folds,
A canopy of silver light condensed
To shape and substance. In the midst there stood
A female form, one hand upon the Cross,

The other raised in menacing act; below
Loose flow'd her raiment, but her breast was arm'd,
And helmeted her head. The Moor turn'd pale,
For on the walls of Auria he had seen
That well-known figure, and had well believed
She rested with the dead. What, hoa! she cried,
Alcahman! In the name of all who fell
At Auria in the massacre, this hour
I summon thee before the throne of God
To answer for the innocent blood! This hour,
Moor, Miscreant, Murderer, Child of Hell, this hour
I summon thee to judgement!.. In the name
Of God! for Spain and Vengeance! Thus she closed
Her speech; for taking from the Primate's hand
That oaken cross which at the sacring rites
Had served for crosier, at the cavern's mouth
Pelayo lifted it and gave the word.
From voice to voice on either side it pass'd
With rapid repetition,.. In the name
Of God! for Spain and Vengeance! and forthwith
On either side along the whole defile
The Asturians shouting in the name of God,
Set the whole ruin loose! huge trunks and stones,
And loosen'd crags, down down they roll'd with rush
And bound, and thundering force. Such was the fall
As when some city by the labouring earth
Heaved from its strong foundations is cast down,
And all its dwellings, towers, and palaces,
In one wide desolation prostrated.
From end to end of that long strait, the crash
Was heard continuous, and commixt with sounds
More dreadful, shrieks of horror and despair,
And death,.. the wild and agonizing cry
Of that whole host in one destruction whelm'd.
Vain was all valour there, all martial skill;
The valiant arm is helpless now; the feet
Swift in the race avail not now to save;
They perish, all their thousands perish there,..
Horsemen and infantry they perish all,..
The outward armour and the bones within
Broken and bruised and crush'd. Echo prolong'd
The long uproar: a silence then ensued,
Through which the sound of Deva's stream was heard,
A lonely voice of waters, wild and sweet;
The lingering groan, the faintly-utter'd prayer,
The louder curses of despairing death,
Ascended not so high. Down from the cave
Pelayo hastes, the Asturians hasten down,
Fierce and immitigable down they speed
On all sides, and along the vale of blood
The avenging sword did mercy's work that hour.

XXIV. RODERICK AND COUNT JULIAN

Thou hast been busy, Death! this day, and yet
But half thy work is done; the Gates of Hell
Are throng'd, yet twice ten thousand spirits more,
Who from their warm and healthful tenements
Fear no divorce, must ere the sun go down
Enter the world of woe! the Gate of Heaven
Is open too, and Angels round the throne
Of Mercy on their golden harps this day
Shall sing the triumphs of Redeeming Love.

There was a Church at Cangas dedicate
To that Apostle unto whom his Lord
Had given the keys; a humble edifice,
Whose rude and time-worn structure suited well
That vale among the mountains. Its low roof
With stone plants and with moss was overgrown,
Short fern, and richer weeds which from the eaves
Hung their long tresses down. White lichens clothed
The sides, save where the ivy spread, which bower'd
The porch, and clustering round the pointed wall,
Wherein two bells, each open to the wind,
Hung side by side, threaded with hairy shoots
The double nich; and climbing to the cross,
Wreathed it and half conceal'd its sacred form
With bushy tufts luxuriant. Here in the font, . .
Borne hither with rejoicing and with prayers
Of all the happy land who saw in him
The lineage of their ancient Chiefs renew'd, . .
The Prince had been immersed: and here within
An oaken galilee, now black with age,
His old Iberian ancestors were laid.

Two stately oaks stood nigh, in the full growth
Of many a century. They had flourish'd there
Before the Gothic sword was felt in Spain,
And when the ancient sceptre of the Goths
Was broken, there they flourish'd still. Their boughs
Mingled on high, and stretching wide around,
Form'd a deep shade, beneath which canopy
Upon the ground Count Julian's board was spread,
For to his daughter he had left his tent
Pitch'd for her use hard by. He at the board
Sate with his trusted Captains, Gunderick,
Felix and Miro, Theudered and Paul,
Basil and Cottila, and Virimar,
Men through all fortunes faithful to their Lord,
And to that old and tried fidelity,
By personal love and honour held in ties
Strong as religious bonds. As there they sate,
In the distant vale a rising dust was seen,

And frequent flash of steel, . . the flying fight
Of men who, by a fiery foe pursued,
Put forth their coursers at full speed, to reach
The aid in which they trust. Up sprung the Chiefs,
And hastily taking helm and shield, and spear,
Sped to their post.
Amid the chesnut groves
On Sella's side, Alphonso had in charge
To watch the foe; a prowling band came nigh,
Whom with the ardour of impetuous youth
He charged and followed them in close pursuit:
Quick succours join'd them; and the strife grew hot,
Ere Pedro hastening to bring off his son,
Or Julian and his Captains, . . bent alike
That hour to abstain from combat, (for by this
Full sure they deem'd Alcahman had secured
The easy means of certain victory,) . .
Could reach the spot. Both thus in their intent
According, somewhat had they now allay'd
The fury of the fight, though still spears flew,
And strokes of sword and mace were interchanged,
When passing through the troop a Moor came up
On errand from the Chief, to Julian sent;
A fatal errand fatally perform'd
For Julian, for the Chief, and for himself,
And all that host of Musselmen he brought;
For while with well-dissembled words he lured
The warrior's ear, the dexterous ruffian mark'd
The favouring moment and unguarded place,
And plunged a javelin in his side. The Count
Fell, but in falling called to Cottila,
Treachery! the Moor! the Moor! . . He too on whom
He call'd had seen the blow from whence it came,
And seized the murderer. Miscreant! he exclaim'd,
Who set thee on? The Musselman, who saw
His secret purpose baffled, undismayed,
Replies, What I have done is authorized;
To punish treachery and prevent worse ill
Orpas and Abulcacem sent me here;
The service of the Caliph and the Faith
Required the blow.
The Prophet and the Fiend
Reward thee then! cried Cottila; meantime
Take thou from me thy proper earthly meed;
Villain! . . and lifting as he spake the sword,
He smote him on the neck: the trenchant blade
Through vein and artery pass'd and yielding bone;
And on the shoulder, as the assassin dropt,
His head half-severed fell. The curse of God
Fall on the Caliph and the Faith and thee;
Stamping for anguish, Cottila pursued!
African dogs, thus is it ye requite
Our services? . . But dearly shall ye pay
For this day's work! . . O Fellow-soldiers, here,
Stretching his hands toward the host, he cried,

Behold your noble leader basely slain!
He who for twenty years hath led us forth
To war, and brought us home with victory,
Here he lies foully murdered, . . by the Moors, . .
Those whom he trusted, whom he served so well!
Our turn is next! but neither will we wait
Idly, nor tamely fall!
Amid the grief,
Tumult, and rage, of those who gather'd round,
When Julian could be heard, I have yet life,
He said, for vengeance. Virimar, speed thou
To yonder Mountaineers, and tell their Chiefs
That Julian's veteran army joins this day
Pelayo's standard! The command devolves
On Gunderick. Fellow-soldiers, who so well
Redress'd the wrongs of your old General,
Ye will not let this death go unrevenged! . .
Tears then were seen on many an iron cheek,
And groans were heard from many a resolute heart,
And vows with imprecations mix'd went forth,
And curses check'd by sobs. Bear me apart,
Said Julian, with a faint and painful voice,
And let me see my daughter ere I die.

Scarce had he spoken when the pitying throng
Divide before her. Eagerly she came;
A deep and fearful lustre in her eye,
A look of settled woe, . . pale, deadly pale,
Yet to no lamentations giving way,
Nor tears nor groans; . . within her breaking heart
She bore the grief, and kneeling solemnly
Beside him, raised her aweful hands to heaven,
And cried, Lord God! be with him in this hour!
Two things have I to think of, O my child,
Vengeance and thee; said Julian. For the first
I have provided: what remains of life
As best may comfort thee may so be best
Employ'd; let me be borne within the church,
And thou, with that good man who follows thee,
Attend me there.
Thus when Florinda heard
Her father speak, a gleam of heavenly joy
Shone through the anguish of her countenance.
O gracious God, she cried, my prayers are heard;
Now let me die! . . They raised him from the earth;
He, knitting as they lifted him his brow,
Drew in through open lips and teeth firm-closed
His painful breath, and on the lance laid hand,
Lest its long shaft should shake the mortal wound.
Gently his men with slow and steady step
Their suffering burthen bore, and in the Church
Before the altar laid him down, his head
Upon Florinda's knees. . . Now, friends, said he,

Farewell. I ever hoped to meet my death
Among ye, like a soldier, . . but not thus!
Go, join the Asturians; and in after years,
When of your old commander ye shall talk,
How well he loved his followers, what he was
In battle, and how basely he was slain,
Let not the tale its fit completion lack,
But say how bravely was his death revenged.
Vengeance! in that good word doth Julian make
His testament; your faithful swords must give
The will its full performance. Leave me now,
I have done with worldly things. Comrades, farewell,
And love my memory!
They with copious tears
Of burning anger, grief exasperating
Their rage, and fury giving force to grief,
Hasten'd to form their ranks against the Moors.
Julian meantime toward the altar turn'd
His languid eyes: That Image, is it not
St. Peter, he inquired, he who denied
His Lord and was forgiven? . . Roderick rejoin'd,
It is the Apostle; and may that same Lord,
O Julian, to thy soul's salvation bless
The seasonable thought!
The dying Count
Then fix'd upon the Goth his earnest eyes.
No time, said he, is this for bravery,
As little for dissemblance. I would fain
Die in the faith wherein my fathers died,
Whereto they pledged me in mine infancy. . .
A soldier's habits, he pursued, have steel'd
My spirit, and perhaps I do not fear
This passage as I ought. But if to feel
That I have sinn'd, and from my soul renounce
The Impostor's faith, which never in that soul
Obtain'd a place, . . if at the Saviour's feet,
Laden with guilt, to cast myself and cry,
Lord, I believe! help thou my unbelief! . .
If this in the sincerity of death
Sufficeth, . . Father, let me from thy lips
Receive the assurances with which the Church
Doth bless the dying Christian.
Roderick raised
His eyes to Heaven, and crossing on his breast
His open palms, Mysterious are thy ways
And merciful, O gracious Lord! he cried,
Who to this end hast thus been pleased to lead
My wandering steps! O Father, this thy son
Hath sinn'd and gone astray: but hast not Thou
Said, When the sinner from his evil ways
Turneth, that he shall save his soul alive,
And Angels at the sight rejoice in Heaven?
Therefore do I, in thy most holy name,
Into thy family receive again
Him who was lost, and in that name absolve
The Penitent. . . So saying on the head
Of Julian solemnly he laid his hands.
Then to the altar tremblingly he turn'd,
And took the bread, and breaking it, pursued,
Julian! receive from me the Bread of Life!

In silence reverently the Count partook
The reconciling rite, and to his lips
Roderick then held the consecrated cup.

Me too! exclaim'd Florinda, who till then
Had listen'd speechlessly; Thou Man of God,
I also must partake! The Lord hath heard
My prayers! one sacrament, . . one hour, . . one grave, . .
One resurrection!
That dread office done,
Count Julian with amazement saw the Priest
Kneel down before him. By the sacrament
Which we have here partaken, Roderick cried,
In this most aweful moment; by that hope, . .
That holy faith which comforts thee in death,
Grant thy forgiveness, Julian, ere thou diest!
Behold the man who most hath injured thee!
Roderick, the wretched Goth, the guilty cause
Of all thy guilt, . . the unworthy instrument
Of thy redemption, . . kneels before thee here,
And prays to be forgiven!
Roderick! exclaim'd
The dying Count, . . Roderick! . . and from the floor
With violent effort half he raised himself;
The spear hung heavy in his side, and pain
And weakness overcame him, that he fell
Back on his daughter's lap. O Death, cried he, . .
Passing his hand across his cold damp brow, . .
Thou tamest the strong limb, and conquerest
The stubborn heart! But yesterday I said
One Heaven could not contain mine enemy
And me: and now I lift my dying voice
To say, Forgive me, Lord, as I forgive
Him who hath done the wrong! . . He closed his eyes
A moment; then with sudden impulse cried, . .
Roderick, thy wife is dead, . . the Church hath power
To free thee from thy vows, . . the broken heart
Might yet be heal'd, the wrong redress'd, the throne
Rebuilt by that same hand which pull'd it down,
And these cursed Africans. . . Oh for a month
Of that waste life which millions misbestow! . .
His voice was passionate, and in his eye
With glowing animation while he spake
The vehement spirit shone: its effort soon
Was pass'd, and painfully with feeble breath
In slow and difficult utterance he pursued, . .
Vain hope, if all the evil was ordain'd,
And this wide wreck the will and work of Heaven,
We but the poor occasion! Death will make
All clear, and joining us in better worlds,
Complete our union there! Do for me now
One friendly office more: draw forth the spear,
And free me from this pain! . . Receive his soul,

Saviour! exclaim'd the Goth, as he perform'd
The fatal service. Julian cried, O friend! . .
True friend! . . and gave to him his dying hand.
Then said he to Florinda, I go first,
Thou followest! . . kiss me, child! . . and now good night!
When from her father's body she arose,
Her cheek was flush'd, and in her eyes there beam'd
A wilder brightness. On the Goth she gazed
While underneath the emotions of that hour
Exhausted life gave way. O God! she said,
Lifting her hands, thou hast restored me all, . .
All . . in one hour! . . and round his neck she threw
Her arms and cried, My Roderick! mine in Heaven!
Groaning, he clasp'd her close, and in that act
And agony her happy spirit fled.

XXV. RODERICK IN BATTLE

Eight thousand men had to Asturias march'd
Beneath Count Julian's banner; the remains
Of that brave army which in Africa
So well against the Musselman made head,
Till sense of injuries insupportable,
And raging thirst of vengeance, overthrew
Their leader's noble spirit. To revenge
His quarrel, twice that number left their bones,
Slain in unnatural battle, on the field
Of Xeres, when the sceptre from the Goths
By righteous Heaven was reft. Others had fallen
Consumed in sieges, alway by the Moor
To the front of war opposed. The policy,
With whatsoever show of honour cloak'd,
Was gross, and this surviving band had oft
At their carousals, of the flagrant wrong,
Held such discourse as stirs the mounting blood,
The common danger with one discontent
Affecting chiefs and men. Nor had the bonds
Of rooted discipline and faith attach'd,
Thus long restrain'd them, had they not known well
That Julian in their just resentment shared,
And fix'd their hopes on him. Slight impulse now
Sufficed to make these fiery martialists
Break forth in open fury; and though first
Count Pedro listen'd with suspicious ear
To Julian's dying errand, deeming it
Some new decoy of treason, . . when he found
A second legate follow'd Virimar,
And then a third, and saw the turbulence
Of the camp, and how against the Moors in haste
They form'd their lines, he knew that Providence
This hour had for his country interposed,
And in such faith advanced to use the aid
Thus wondrously ordain'd. The eager Chiefs
Hasten to greet him, Cottila and Paul,
Basil and Miro, Theudered, Gunderick,

Felix, and all who held authority;
The zealous services of their brave host
They proffer'd, and besought him instantly
To lead against the African their force
Combined, and in good hour assail a foe
Divided, nor for such attack prepared.

While thus they communed, Roderick from the church
Came forth, and seeing Pedro, bent his way
Toward them. Sirs, said he, the Count is dead;
He died a Christian, reconciled to Heaven,
In faith; and when his daughter had received
His dying breath, her spirit too took flight.
One sacrament, one death, united them;
And I beseech ye, ye who from the work
Of blood which lies before us may return, . .
If, as I think, it should not be my fate . .
That in one grave with Christian ceremonies
Ye lay them side by side. In Heaven I ween
They are met through mercy: . . ill befall the man
Who should in death divide them! . . Then he turn'd
His speech to Pedro in an under voice;
The King, said he, I know with noble mind
Will judge of the departed; Christian like
He died, and with a manly penitence:
They who condemn him most should call to mind
How grievous was the wrong which madden'd him;
Be that remember'd in his history,
And let no shame be offer'd his remains.
As Pedro would have answer'd, a loud cry
Of menacing imprecation from the troops
Arose; for Orpas, by the Moorish Chief
Sent to allay the storm his villainy
Had stirr'd, came hastening on a milk-white steed,
And at safe distance having check'd the rein,
Beckon'd for parley. 'Twas Orelio
On which he rode, Roderick's own battle-horse,
Who from his master's hand had wont to feed,
And with a glad docility obey
His voice familiar. At the sight the Goth
Started, and indignation to his soul
Brought back the thoughts and feelings of old times.
Suffer me, Count, he cried, to answer him,
And hold these back the while! Thus having said,
He waited no reply, but as he was,
Bareheaded, in his weeds, and all unarm'd,
Advanced toward the renegade. Sir Priest,
Quoth Orpas as he came, I hold no talk
With thee; my errand is with Gunderick
And the Captains of the host, to whom I bring
Such liberal offers and clear proof . .
The Goth,
Breaking with scornful voice his speech, exclaim'd,
What, could no steed but Roderick's serve thy turn?
I should have thought some sleek and sober mule
Long train'd in shackles to procession pace,
More suited to my lord of Seville's use

Than this good war-horse, . . he who never bore
A villain, until Orpas cross'd his back ! . .
Wretch ! cried the astonish'd renegade, and stoopt,
Foaming with anger, from the saddle-bow
To reach his weapon. Ere the hasty hand
Trembling in passion could perform its will,
Roderick had seized the reins. How now, he cried,
Orelio ! old companion, . . my good horse, . .
Off with this recreant burthen ! . . And with that
He raised his hand, and rear'd and back'd the steed,
To that remember'd voice and arm of power
Obedient. Down the helpless traitor fell
Violently thrown, and Roderick over him
Thrice led with just and unrelenting hand
The trampling hoofs. Go join Witiza now,
Where he lies howling, the avenger cried,
And tell him Roderick sent thee !
At that sight,
Count Julian's soldiers and the Asturian host
Set up a shout, a joyful shout, which rung
Wide through the welkin. Their exulting cry
With louder acclamation was renew'd,
When from the expiring miscreant's neck they saw
That Roderick took the shield, and round his own
Hung it, and vaulted in the seat. My horse !
My noble horse ! he cried, with flattering hand
Patting his high-arch'd neck ! the renegade,
I thank him for't, hath kept thee daintily !
Orelio, thou art in thy beauty still,
Thy pride and strength ! Orelio, my good horse,
Once more thou bearest to the field thy Lord,
He who so oft hath fed and cherish'd thee,
He for whose sake, wherever thou wert seen,
Thou wert by all men honour'd. Once again
Thou hast thy proper master ! Do thy part
As thou wert wont ; and bear him gloriously,
My beautiful Orelio, . . to the last , . .
The happiest of his fields ! . . Then he drew forth
The scymitar, and waving it aloft,
Rode toward the troops ; its unaccustom'd shape
Disliked him ; Renegade in all things ! cried
The Goth, and cast it from him ; to the Chiefs
Then said, If I have done ye service here,
Help me, I pray you, to a Spanish sword !
The trustiest blade that e'er in Bilbilis
Was dipt, would not to-day be misbestowed
On this right hand ! . . Go some one, Gunderick cried,
And bring Count Julian's sword. Whoe'er thou art,
The worth which thou hast shown avenging him
Entitles thee to wear it. But thou goest

For battle unequipp'd; . . haste there and strip
Yon villain of his armour!
Late he spake,
So fast the Moors came on. It matters not,
Replied the Goth; there's many a mountaineer,
Who in no better armour cased this day
Than his wonted leathern gipion, will be found
In the hottest battle, yet bring off untouch'd
The unguarded life he ventures. . . Taking then
Count Julian's sword, he fitted round his wrist
The chain, and eyeing the elaborate steel
With stern regard of joy, The African
Under unhappy stars was born, he cried,
Who tastes thy edge! . . Make ready for the charge!
They come . . they come! . . On, brethren, to the field! . .
The word is Vengeance!
Vengeance was the word;
From man to man, and rank to rank it pass'd,
By every heart enforced, by every voice
Sent forth in loud defiance of the foe.
The enemy in shriller sounds return'd
Their Akbar and the Prophet's trusted name.
The horsemen lower'd their spears, the infantry
Deliberately with slow and steady step
Advanced; the bowstrings twang'd, and arrows hiss'd,
And javelins hurtled by. Anon the hosts
Met in the shock of battle, horse and man
Conflicting; shield struck shield, and sword and mace
And curtle-axe on helm and buckler rung;
Armour was riven, and wounds were interchanged,
And many a spirit from its mortal hold
Hurried to bliss or bale. Well did the Chiefs
Of Julian's army in that hour support
Their old esteem; and well Count Pedro there
Enhanced his former praise; and by his side,
Rejoicing like a bridegroom in the strife,
Alphonso through the host of infidels
Bore on his bloody lance dismay and death.
But there was worst confusion and uproar,
There widest slaughter and dismay, where, proud
Of his recover'd Lord, Orelio plunged
Through thickest ranks, trampling beneath his feet
The living and the dead. Where'er he turns
The Moors divide and fly. What man is this,
Appall'd they say, who to the front of war
Bareheaded offers thus his naked life?
Replete with power he is, and terrible,
Like some destroying Angel! Sure his lips
Have drank of Kaf's dark fountain, and he comes
Strong in his immortality! Fly! fly!
They said, this is no human foe! . . Nor less
Of wonder fill'd the Spaniards when they saw
How flight and terror went before his way,
And slaughter in his path. Behold, cries one,
With what command and knightly ease he sits
The intrepid steed, and deals from side to side

His dreadful blows! Not Roderick in his power
Bestrode with such command and majesty
That noble war-horse. His loose robe this day
Is death's black banner, shaking from its folds
Dismay and ruin. Of no mortal mould
Is he who in that garb of peace affronts
Whole hosts, and sees them scatter where he turns!
Auspicious Heaven beholds us, and some Saint
Revisits earth!
Ay, cries another, Heaven
Hath ever with especial bounty blest
Above all other lands its favour'd Spain;
Chusing her children forth from all mankind
For its peculiar people, as of yore
Abraham's ungrateful race beneath the Law.
Who knows not how on that most holy night
When peace on Earth by Angels was proclaim'd,
The light which o'er the fields of Bethlehem shone,
Irradiated whole Spain? not just display'd,
As to the Shepherds, and again withdrawn;
All the long winter hours from eve till morn
Her forests and her mountains and her plains,
Her hills and valleys were embathed in light,
A light which came not from the sun or moon
Or stars, by secondary powers dispensed,
But from the fountain-springs the Light of Light
Effluent. And wherefore should we not believe
That this may be some Saint or Angel, charged
To lead us to miraculous victory?
Hath not the Virgin Mother oftentimes
Descending, clothed in glory, sanctified
With feet adorable our happy soil? . .
Mark'd ye not, said another, how he cast
In wrath the unhallow'd scymitar away,
And called for Christian weapon? Oh be sure
This is the aid of Heaven! On, comrades, on!
A miracle to-day is wrought for Spain!
Victory and Vengeance! Hew the miscreants down,
And spare not! hew them down in sacrifice!
God is with us! his Saints are in the field!
Victory! miraculous Victory!
Thus they
Inflamed with wild belief the keen desire
Of vengeance on their enemies abhorr'd.
The Moorish chief, meantime, o'erlook'd the fight
From an eminence, and cursed the renegade
Whose counsels sorting to such ill effect
Had brought this danger on. Lo, from the East
Comes fresh alarm! a few poor fugitives
Well-nigh with fear exanimate came up,
From Covadonga flying, and the rear
Of that destruction, scarce with breath to tell
Their dreadful tale. When Abulcacem heard,
Stricken with horror, like a man bereft
Of sense, he stood. O Prophet, he exclaim'd,
A hard and cruel fortune hast thou brought

This day upon thy servant! Must I then
Here with disgrace and ruin close a life
Of glorious deeds? But how should man resist
Fate's irreversible decrees, or why
Murmur at what must be? They who survive
May mourn the evil which this day begins:
My part will soon be done! . . Grief then gave way
To rage, and cursing Guisla, he pursued,
Oh that that treacherous woman were but here!
It were a consolation to give her
The evil death she merits!
That reward
She hath had, a Moor replied. For when we reach'd
The entrance of the vale, it was her choice
There in the farthest dwellings to be left,
Lest she should see her brother's face; but thence
We found her flying at the overthrow,
And visiting the treason on her head,
Pierced her with wounds. . . Poor vengeance for a host
Destroyed! said Abulcacem in his soul.
Howbeit, resolving to the last to do
His office, he roused up his spirit. Go,
Strike off Count Eudon's head! he cried; the fear
Which brought him to our camp will bring him else
In arms against us now; For Sisibert
And Ebba, he continued thus in thought,
Their uncle's fate for ever bars all plots
Of treason on their part; no hope have they
Of safety but with us. He call'd them then
With chosen troops to join him in the front
Of battle, that by bravely making head,
Retreat might now be won. Then fiercer raged
The conflict, and more frequent cries of death,
Mingling with imprecations and with prayers,
Rose through the din of war.
By this the blood
Which Deva down her fatal channel pour'd,
Purpling Pionia's course, had reach'd and stain'd
The wider stream of Sella. Soon far off
The frequent glance of spears and gleam of arms
Were seen, which sparkled to the westering orb,
Where down the vale impatient to complete
The glorious work so well that day begun,
Pelayo led his troops. On foot they came,
Chieftains and men alike; the Oaken Cross
Triumphant borne on high, precedes their march,
And broad and bright the argent banner shone.
Roderick, who dealing death from side to side,
Had through the Moorish army now made way,
Beheld it flash, and judging well what aid
Approach'd, with sudden impulse that way rode,
To tell of what had pass'd, . . lest in the strife
They should engage with Julian's men, and mar
The mighty consummation. One ran on
To meet him fleet of foot, and having given

His tale to this swift messenger, the Goth
Halted awhile to let Orelio breathe.
Siverian, quoth Pelayo, if mine eyes
Deceive me not, yon horse, whose reeking sides
Are red with slaughter, is the same on whom
The apostate Orpas in his vauntery
Wont to parade the streets of Cordoba.
But thou shouldst know him best; regard him well:
Is't not Orelio?
Either it is he,
The old man replied, or one so like to him,
Whom all thought matchless, that similitude
Would be the greater wonder. But behold,
What man is he who in that disarray
Doth with such power and majesty bestride
The noble steed, as if he felt himself
In his own proper seat? Look how he leans
To cherish him; and how the gallant horse
Curves up his stately neck, and bends his head,
As if again to court that gentle touch,
And answer to the voice which praises him.
Can it be Maccabee? rejoin'd the King,
Or are the secret wishes of my soul
Indeed fulfill'd, and hath the grave given up
Its dead? . . So saying, on the old man he turn'd
Eyes full of wide astonishment, which told
The incipient thought that for incredible
He spake no farther. But enough had pass'd,
For old Siverian started at the words
Like one who sees a spectre, and exclaim'd,
Blind that I was to know him not till now!
My Master, O my Master!
He meantime
With easy pace moved on to meet their march.
King, to Pelayo he began, this day
By means scarce less than miracle, thy throne
Is stablish'd, and the wrongs of Spain revenged.
Orpas the accursed, upon yonder field
Lies ready for the ravens. By the Moors
Treacherously slain, Count Julian will be found
Before Saint Peter's altar; unto him
Grace was vouchsafed; and by that holy power
Which at Visonia from the Primate's hand
Of his own proper act to me was given,
Unworthy as I am, . . yet sure I think
Not without mystery as the event hath shown, . .
Did I accept Count Julian's penitence,
And reconcile the dying man to Heaven.
Beside him hath his daughter fallen asleep;
Deal honourably with his remains, and let
One grave with Christian rites receive them both.
Is it not written that as the Tree falls
So it shall lie?
In this and all things else,
Pelayo answer'd, looking wistfully
Upon the Goth, thy pleasure shall be done.
Then Roderick saw that he was known, and turn'd
His head away in silence. But the old man

Laid hold upon his bridle, and look'd up
In his master's face, weeping and silently.
Thereat the Goth with fervent pressure took
His hand, and bending down toward him said,
My good Siverian, go not thou this day
To war! I charge thee keep thyself from harm!
Thou art past the age for battles, and with whom
Hereafter should thy mistress talk of me
If thou wert gone? . . Thou seest I am unarm'd;
Thus disarray'd as thou beholdest me,
Clean through yon miscreant army have I cut
My way unhurt; but being once by Heaven
Preserved, I would not perish with the guilt
Of having wilfully provoked my death.
Give me thy helmet and thy cuirass! . . nay, . .
Thou wert not wont to let me ask in vain,
Nor to gainsay me when my will was known!
To thee methinks I should be still the King.

Thus saying, they withdrew a little way
Within the trees. Roderick alighted there,
And in the old man's armour dight himself.
Dost thou not marvel by what wondrous chance,
Said he, Orelio to his master's hand
Hath been restored? I found the renegade
Of Seville on his back, and hurl'd him down
Headlong to the earth. The noble animal
Rejoicingly obey'd my hand to shake
His recreant burthen off, and trample out
The life which once I spared in evil hour.
Now let me meet Witiza's viperous sons
In yonder field, and then I may go rest
In peace, . . my work is done!
And nobly done!
Exclaim'd the old man. Oh! thou art greater now
Than in that glorious hour of victory
When grovelling in the dust Witiza lay,
The prisoner of thy hand! . . Roderick replied,
O good Siverian, happier victory
Thy son hath now achieved! . . the victory
Over the world, his sins, and his despair.
If on the field my body should be found,
See it, I charge thee, laid in Julian's grave,
And let no idle ear be told for whom
Thou mournest. Thou wilt use Orelio
As doth beseem the steed which hath so oft
Carried a King to battle; . . he hath done
Good service for his rightful Lord to-day,
And better yet must do. Siverian, now
Farewell! I think we shall not meet again
Till it be in that world where never change
Is known, and they who love shall part no more.
Commend me to my mother's prayers, and say
That never man enjoy'd a heavenlier peace
Than Roderick at this hour. O faithful friend,
How dear thou art to me these tears may tell!

With that he fell upon the old man's neck;
Then vaulted in the saddle, gave the reins,
And soon rejoin'd the host. On, comrades, on!
Victory and Vengeance! he exclaim'd, and took
The lead on that good charger, he alone
Horsed for the onset. They with one consent
Gave all their voices to the inspiring cry,
Victory and Vengeance! and the hills and rocks
Caught the prophetic shout and roll'd it round.
Count Pedro's people heard amid the heat
Of battle, and return'd the glad acclaim.
The astonish'd Musselmen, on all sides charged,
Hear that tremendous cry; yet manfully
They stood, and everywhere with gallant front
Opposed in fair array the shock of war.
Desperately they fought, like men expert in arms,
And knowing that no safety could be found,
Save from their own right hands. No former day
Of all his long career had seen their chief
Approved so well; nor had Witiza's sons
Ever before this hour achieved in fight
Such feats of resolute valour. Sisibert
Beheld Pelayo in the field afoot,
And twice essay'd beneath his horse's feet
To thrust him down. Twice did the Prince evade
The shock, and twice upon his shield received
The fratricidal sword. Tempt me no more,
Son of Witiza, cried the indignant chief,
Lest I forget what mother gave thee birth!
Go meet thy death from any hand but mine!
He said, and turn'd aside. Fitliest from me!
Exclaim'd a dreadful voice, as through the throng
Orelio forced his way; fitliest from me
Receive the rightful death too long withheld!
'Tis Roderick strikes the blow! And as he spake,
Upon the traitor's shoulder fierce he drove
The weapon, well-bestow'd. He in the seat
Totter'd and fell. The Avenger hasten'd on
In search of Ebba; and in the heat of fight
Rejoicing and forgetful of all else,
Set up his cry as he was wont in youth,
Roderick the Goth! . . his war-cry known so well.
Pelayo eagerly took up the word,
And shouted out his kinsman's name beloved,
Roderick the Goth! Roderick and Victory!
Roderick and Vengeance! Odoar gave it forth;
Urban repeated it, and through his ranks
Count Pedro sent the cry. Not from the field
Of his great victory, when Witiza fell,
With louder acclamations had that name
Been borne abroad upon the winds of heaven.
The unreflecting throng, who yesterday,
If it had pass'd their lips, would with a curse
Have clogg'd it, echoed it as if it came

From some celestial voice in the air, reveal'd
To be the certain pledge of all their hopes.
Roderick the Goth! Roderick and Victory!
Roderick and Vengeance! O'er the field it spread,
All hearts and tongues uniting in the cry;
Mountains and rocks and vales re-echoed round;
And he, rejoicing in his strength, rode on,
Laying on the Moors with that good sword, and smote,
And overthrew, and scatter'd, and destroy'd,
And trampled down; and still at every blow
Exultingly he sent the war-cry forth,
Roderick the Goth! Roderick and Victory!
Roderick and Vengeance!
Thus he made his way,
Smiting and slaying through the astonish'd ranks,
Till he beheld, where on a fiery barb,
Ebba, performing well a soldier's part,
Dealt to the right and left his deadly blows.
With mutual rage they met. The renegade
Displays a scymitar, the splendid gift
Of Walid from Damascus sent; its hilt
Emboss'd with gems, its blade of perfect steel,
Which, like a mirror sparkling to the sun
With dazzling splendour, flash'd. The Goth objects
His shield, and on its rim received the edge
Driven from its aim aside, and of its force
Diminish'd. Many a frustrate stroke was dealt
On either part, and many a foin and thrust
Aim'd and rebated; many a deadly blow,
Straight, or reverse, delivered and repell'd.
Roderick at length with better speed hath reach'd
The apostate's turban, and through all its folds
The true Cantabrian weapon making way
Attain'd his forehead. Wretch! the avenger cried,
It comes from Roderick's hand! Roderick the Goth,
Who spared, who trusted thee, and was betray'd!
Go tell thy father now how thou hast sped
With all thy treasons! Saying thus he seized
The miserable, who, blinded now with blood,
Reel'd in the saddle; and with sidelong step
Backing Orelio, drew him to the ground.
He shrieking, as beneath the horse's feet
He fell, forgot his late-learnt creed, and called
On Mary's name. The dreadful Goth pass'd on,
Still plunging through the thickest war, and still
Scattering, where'er he turn'd, the affrighted ranks.

O who could tell what deeds were wrought that day;
Or who endure to hear the tale of rage,
Hatred, and madness, and despair, and fear,
Horror, and wounds, and agony, and death,

The cries, the blasphemies, the shrieks, and groans,
And prayers, which mingled with the din of arms
In one wild uproar of terrific sounds;
While over all predominant was heard,
Reiterate from the conquerors o'er the field,
Roderick the Goth! Roderick and Victory!
Roderick and Vengeance! . . Woe for Africa!
Woe for the circumcised! Woe for the faith
Of the lying Ishmaelite that hour! The Chiefs
Have fallen; the Moors, confused and captainless,
And panic-stricken, vainly seek to escape
The inevitable fate. Turn where they will,
Strong in his cause, rejoicing in success,
Insatiate at the banquet of revenge,
The enemy is there; look where they will,
Death hath environed their devoted ranks:
Fly where they will, the avenger and the sword
Await them, . . wretches! whom the righteous arm
Hath overtaken! . . Join'd in bonds of faith
Accurs'd, the most flagitious of mankind
From all parts met are here; the apostate Greek,
The vicious Syrian, and the sullen Copt,
The Persian cruel and corrupt of soul,
The Arabian robber, and the prowling sons
Of Africa, who from their thirsty sands
Pray that the locusts on the peopled plain
May settle and prepare their way. Conjoined
Beneath an impious faith, which sanctifies
To them all deeds of wickedness and blood, . .
Yea, and halloos them on, . . here are they met
To be conjoin'd in punishment this hour.
For plunder, violation, massacre,
All hideous, all unutterable things,
The righteous, the immitigable sword
Exacts due vengeance now! the cry of blood
Is heard: the measure of their crimes is full;
Such mercy as the Moor at Auria gave,
Such mercy hath he found this dreadful hour!

The evening darken'd, but the avenging sword
Turn'd not away its edge till night had closed
Upon the field of blood. The Chieftains then
Blew the recall, and from their perfect work
Return'd rejoicing, all but he for whom
All look'd with most expectance. He full sure
Had thought upon that field to find his end
Desired, and with Florinda in the grave
Rest, in indissoluble union join'd.
But still where through the press of war he went
Half-arm'd, and like a lover seeking death,
The arrows pass'd him by to right and left,
The spear-point pierced him not, the scymitar
Glanced from his helmet; he, when he beheld

The rout complete, saw that the shield
of Heaven
Had been extended over him once more,
And bowed before its will. Upon the
banks
Of Sella was Orelio found, his legs
And flanks incarnadined, his poitral
smeared
With froth and foam and gore, his silver
mane
Sprinkled with blood, which hung on
every hair,
Aspersed like dew-drops; trembling
there he stood
From the toil of battle, and at times
sent forth
His tremulous voice far echoing loud
and shrill,
A frequent anxious cry, with which he
seem'd
To call the master whom he loved so
well,
And who had thus again forsaken him.
Siverian's helm and cuirass on the grass
Lay near; and Julian's sword, its hilt
and chain
Clotted with blood; but where was he
whose hand
Had wielded it so well that glorious
day? . .

Days, months, and years, and genera-
tions pass'd,
And centuries held their course, before,
far off
Within a hermitage near Viseu's walls
A humble tomb was found, which bore
inscribed
In ancient characters King Roderick's
name.

SELECTED MINOR POEMS

THE HOLLY TREE

[First published in *The Morning Post*, Dec. 17, 1798, afterwards in *The Annual Anthology*, 1799, and in *Metrical Tales*, 1805.]

1

O READER! hast thou ever stood to see
The Holly Tree?
The eye that contemplates it well perceives
Its glossy leaves
Order'd by an intelligence so wise,
As might confound the Atheist's sophistries.

2

Below, a circling fence, its leaves are seen
Wrinkled and keen;
No grazing cattle through their prickly round
Can reach to wound;
But as they grow where nothing is to fear,
Smooth and unarm'd the pointless leaves appear.

3

I love to view these things with curious eyes,
And moralize:
And in this wisdom of the Holly Tree
Can emblems see
Wherewith perchance to make a pleasant rhyme,
One which may profit in the after time.

4

Thus, though abroad perchance I might appear
Harsh and austere,
To those who on my leisure would intrude
Reserved and rude,
Gentle at home amid my friends I'd be
Like the high leaves upon the Holly Tree.

5

And should my youth, as youth is apt I know,
Some harshness show,
All vain asperities I day by day
Would wear away,
Till the smooth temper of my age should be
Like the high leaves upon the Holly Tree.

6

And as when all the summer trees are seen
So bright and green,
The Holly leaves a sober hue display
Less bright than they,
But when the bare and wintry woods we see,
What then so cheerful as the Holly Tree?

7

So serious should my youth appear among
The thoughtless throng,
So would I seem amid the young and gay
More grave than they,
That in my age as cheerful I might be
As the green winter of the Holly Tree.

Westbury, 1798.

THE DEAD FRIEND

[Published in *The Annual Anthology*, 1799, and in *Metrical Tales*, 1805.]

1

NOT to the grave, not to the grave, my Soul,
Descend to contemplate
The form that once was dear
The Spirit is not there
Which kindled that dead eye,
Which throbb'd in that cold heart,
Which in that motionless hand
Hath met thy friendly grasp.
The Spirit is not there!
It is but lifeless perishable flesh
That moulders in the grave;
Earth, air, and water's ministering particles
Now to the elements
Resolved, their uses done.
Not to the grave, not to the grave, my Soul,
Follow thy friend beloved,
The spirit is not there!

2

Often together have we talk'd of death;
How sweet it were to see
All doubtful things made clear;
How sweet it were with powers
Such as the Cherubim,
To view the depth of Heaven!
O Edmund! thou hast first
Begun the travel of Eternity!
I look upon the stars,
And think that thou art there,
Unfetter'd as the thought that follows thee.

3

And we have often said how sweet it were
With unseen ministry of angel power
To watch the friends we loved.
Edmund! we did not err!
Sure I have felt thy presence! Thou hast given
A birth to holy thought,
Has kept me from the world unstain'd and pure.
Edmund! we did not err!
Our best affections here
They are not like the toys of infancy;
The Soul outgrows them not;
We do not cast them off;
Oh if it could be so,
It were indeed a dreadful thing to die!

4

Not to the grave, not to the grave, my Soul,
Follow thy friend beloved!
But in the lonely hour,
But in the evening walk,
Think that he companies thy solitude;
Think that he holds with thee
Mysterious intercourse;
And though remembrance wake a tear,
There will be joy in grief.

Westbury, 1799.

TO MARY

[First published in *The Morning Post*, Oct. 20, 1803, under the title: 'Stanzas written after a Long Absence.']

MARY! ten chequer'd years have past
Since we beheld each other last;
Yet, Mary, I remember thee,
Nor canst thou have forgotten me.

The bloom was then upon thy face,
Thy form had every youthful grace;
I too had then the warmth of youth,
And in our hearts was all its truth.

We conversed, were there others by,
With common mirth and random eye;
But when escaped the sight of men,
How serious was our converse then!

Our talk was then of years to come,
Of hopes which ask'd a humble doom,
Themes which to loving thoughts might move,
Although we never spake of love.

At our last meeting sure thy heart
Was even as loth as mine to part;
And yet we little thought that then
We parted . . not to meet again.

Long, Mary! after that adieu,
My dearest day-dreams were of you;
In sleep I saw you still, and long
Made you the theme of secret song.

When manhood and its cares came on,
The humble hopes of youth were gone;
And other hopes and other fears
Effaced the thoughts of happier years.

Meantime through many a varied year
Of thee no tidings did I hear,
And thou hast never heard my name
Save from the vague reports of fame.

But then I trust detraction's lie
Hath kindled anger in thine eye;
And thou my praise wert proud to see, . .
My name should still be dear to thee.

Ten years have held their course; thus late
I learn the tidings of thy fate;
A Husband and a Father now,
Of thee, a Wife and Mother thou.

And, Mary, as for thee I frame
A prayer which hath no selfish aim,
No happier lot can I wish thee
Than such as Heaven hath granted me.

London, 1802.

FUNERAL SONG, FOR THE PRINCESS CHARLOTTE OF WALES

[Published in *The Annual Register* for 1827 and in *Friendship's Offering* for 1828.]

In its summer pride array'd,
Low our Tree of Hope is laid!
Low it lies: . . in evil hour,
Visiting the bridal bower,
Death hath levell'd root and flower.
Windsor, in thy sacred shade,
(This the end of pomp and power!)
Have the rites of death been paid:
Windsor, in thy sacred shade
Is the Flower of Brunswick laid!

Ye whose relics rest around,
Tenants of this funeral ground!
Know ye, Spirits, who is come,
By immitigable doom
Summon'd to the untimely tomb?
Late with youth and splendour crown'd,
Late in beauty's vernal bloom,
Late with love and joyaunce blest!
Never more lamented guest
Was in Windsor laid to rest.

Henry, thou of saintly worth,
Thou, to whom thy Windsor gave
Nativity and name, and grave;
Thou art in this hallowed earth
Cradled for the immortal birth;
Heavily upon his head
Ancestral crimes were visited:
He, in spirit like a child,
Meek of heart and undefiled,
Patiently his crown resign'd,
And fix'd on heaven his heavenly mind,
Blessing, while he kiss'd the rod,
His Redeemer and his God.
Now may he in realms of bliss
Greet a soul as pure as his.

Passive as that humble spirit,
Lies his bold dethroner too;
A dreadful debt did he inherit
To his injured lineage due;
Ill-starr'd prince, whose martial merit
His own England long might rue!
Mournful was that Edward's fame,
Won in fields contested well,
While he sought his rightful claim:
Witness Aire's unhappy water,
Where the ruthless Clifford fell;
And when Wharfe ran red with slaughter,
On the day of Towton's field,
Gathering, in its guilty flood,
The carnage and the ill-spilt blood
That forty thousand lives could yield.
Cressy was to this but sport, . .
Poictiers but a pageant vain;
And the victory of Spain
Seem'd a strife for pastime meant,
And the work of Agincourt
Only like a tournament;
Half the blood which there was spent,
Had sufficed again to gain
Anjou and ill-yielded Maine,
Normandy and Aquitaine,
And Our Lady's ancient towers,
Maugre all the Valois' powers,
Had a second time been ours. . .
A gentle daughter of thy line,
Edward, lays her dust with thine.

Thou, Elizabeth, art here;
Thou to whom all griefs were known;
Who wert placed upon the bier
In happier hour than on the throne.
Fatal daughter, fatal mother,
Raised to that ill-omen'd station,
Father, uncle, sons, and brother,
Mourn'd in blood her elevation!
Woodville, in the realms of bliss,
To thine offspring thou may'st say,
Early death is happiness;
And favour'd in their lot are they
Who are not left to learn below
That length of life is length of woe.
Lightly let this ground be prest;
A broken heart is here at rest.

But thou, Seymour, with a greeting,
Such as sisters use at meeting,
Joy, and sympathy, and love,
Wilt hail her in the seats above.
Like in loveliness were ye,
By a like lamented doom,
Hurried to an early tomb.
While together, spirits blest,
Here your earthly relics rest,
Fellow angels shall ye be
In the angelic company.

Henry, too, hath here his part;
At the gentle Seymour's side,
With his best beloved bride,
Cold and quiet, here are laid
The ashes of that fiery heart.
Not with his tyrannic spirit,
Shall our Charlotte's soul inherit;
No, by Fisher's hoary head,—
By More, the learned and the good,—
By Katharine's wrongs and Boleyn's blood,—
By the life so basely shed
Of the pride of Norfolk's line,
By the axe so often red,
By the fire with martyrs fed,
Hateful Henry, not with thee
May her happy spirit be!

And here lies one whose tragic name
A reverential thought may claim;
That murder'd Monarch, whom the grave,
Revealing its long secret, gave
Again to sight, that we might spy
His comely face and waking eye!
There, thrice fifty years, it lay,
Exempt from natural decay,
Unclosed and bright, as if to say,

A plague, of bloodier, baser birth,
Than that beneath whose rage he bled,
Was loose upon our guilty earth;—
Such aweful warning from the dead,
Was given by that portentous eye;
Then it closed eternally.

Ye whose relics rest around,
Tenants of this funeral ground;
Even in your immortal spheres,
What fresh yearnings will ye feel,
When this earthly guest appears!
Us she leaves in grief and tears;
But to you will she reveal
Tidings of old England's weal;
Of a righteous war pursued,
Long, through evil and through good,
With unshaken fortitude;
Of peace, in battle twice achieved;
Of her fiercest foe subdued,
And Europe from the yoke reliev'd,
Upon that Brabantine plain!
Such the proud, the virtuous story,
Such the great, the endless glory
Of her father's splendid reign!
He who wore the sable mail,
Might at this heroic tale,
Wish himself on earth again.

One who reverently, for thee,
Raised the strain of bridal verse,
Flower of Brunswick! mournfully
Lays a garland on thy herse.

MY DAYS AMONG THE DEAD ARE PAST

1

My days among the Dead are past;
Around me I behold,
Where'er these casual eyes are cast,
The mighty minds of old;
My never-failing friends are they,
With whom I converse day by day.

2

With them I take delight in weal,
And seek relief in woe;
And while I understand and feel
How much to them I owe,
My cheeks have often been bedew'd
With tears of thoughtful gratitude.

3

My thoughts are with the Dead, with them
I live in long-past years,
Their virtues love, their faults condemn,
Partake their hopes and fears,
And from their lessons seek and find
Instruction with an humble mind.

4

My hopes are with the Dead, anon
My place with them will be,
And I with them shall travel on
Through all Futurity;
Yet leaving here a name, I trust,
That will not perish in the dust.

Keswick, 1818.

IMITATED FROM THE PERSIAN

[First published in *The Bijou* for 1828.]

Lord! who art merciful as well as just,
Incline thine ear to me, a child of dust!
Not what I would, O Lord! I offer thee,
Alas! but what I can. [man,
Father Almighty, who hast made me
And bade me look to Heaven, for Thou art there,
Accept my sacrifice and humble prayer.
Four things which are not in thy treasury,
I lay before thee, Lord, with this petition: . .
My nothingness, my wants,
My sins, and my contrition.

Lowther Castle, 1828.

THE CATARACT OF LODORE

DESCRIBED IN RHYMES FOR THE NURSERY

[Published in Joanna Baillie's *A Collection of Poems, chiefly Manuscript*, 1823.]

'How does the Water
Come down at Lodore?'
My little boy ask'd me
Thus, once on a time;
And moreover he task'd me
To tell him in rhyme.
Anon at the word,
There first came one daughter
And then came another,
To second and third
The request of their brother,
And to hear how the water
Comes down at Lodore,
With its rush and its roar,
As many a time
They had seen it before.
So I told them in rhyme,
For of rhymes I had store:
And 'twas in my vocation
For their recreation
That so I should sing;
Because I was Laureate
To them and the King.

From its sources which well
In the Tarn on the fell;
From its fountains
In the mountains,
Its rills and its gills;
Through moss and through brake,
It runs and it creeps
For awhile, till it sleeps
In its own little Lake.
And thence at departing,
Awakening and starting,
It runs through the reeds
And away it proceeds,
Through meadow and glade,
In sun and in shade,
And through the wood-shelter,
Among crags in its flurry,
Helter-skelter,
Hurry-scurry.
Here it comes sparkling,
And there it lies darkling;
Now smoaking and frothing
Its tumult and wrath in,
Till in this rapid race
On which it is bent,
It reaches the place
Of its steep descent.

The Cataract strong
Then plunges along,
Striking and raging
As if a war waging
Its caverns and rocks among:
Rising and leaping,
Sinking and creeping,
Swelling and sweeping,
Showering and springing,
Flying and flinging,
Writhing and ringing,
Eddying and whisking,
Spouting and frisking,
Turning and twisting,
Around and around
With endless rebound!
Smiting and fighting,
A sight to delight in;
Confounding, astounding,
Dizzying and deafening the ear with its sound.

Collecting, projecting,
Receding and speeding,
And shocking and rocking,
And darting and parting,
And threading and spreading,
And whizzing and hissing,
And dripping and skipping,
And hitting and splitting,
And shining and twining,
And rattling and battling,
And shaking and quaking,

And pouring and roaring,
And waving and raving,
And tossing and crossing,
And flowing and going,
And running and stunning,
And foaming and roaming,
And dinning and spinning,
And dropping and hopping,
And working and jerking,
And guggling and struggling,
And heaving and cleaving,
And moaning and groaning;

And glittering and frittering,
And gathering and feathering,
And whitening and brightening,
And quivering and shivering,
And hurrying and skurrying,
And thundering and floundering;

Dividing and gliding and sliding,
And falling and brawling and sprawling,
And driving and riving and striving,
And sprinkling and twinkling and wrinkling,
And sounding and bounding and rounding,
And bubbling and troubling and doubling,
And grumbling and rumbling and tumbling,
And clattering and battering and shattering;

Retreating and beating and meeting and sheeting,
Delaying and straying and playing and spraying,
Advancing and prancing and glancing and dancing,
Recoiling, turmoiling and toiling and boiling,
And gleaming and streaming and steaming and beaming,
And rushing and flushing and brushing and gushing,
And flapping and rapping and clapping and slapping,
And curling and whirling and purling and twirling,
And thumping and plumping and bumping and jumping,
And dashing and flashing and splashing and clashing;
And so never ending, but always descending,
Sounds and motions for ever and ever are blending,
All at once and all o'er, with a mighty uproar,
And this way the Water comes down at Lodore.

Keswick, 1820.

SONNETS

[The two following Sonnets were numbered V and XV respectively among the Sonnets as printed in the collected edition of 1837–1838. The first was published in *Poems*, 1797; the second in *The Annual Anthology*, 1800.]

(1) THE EVENING RAINBOW

[Published in *Poems*, 1797.]

Mild arch of promise, on the evening sky
Thou shinest fair with many a lovely ray
Each in the other melting. Much mine eye
Delights to linger on thee; for the day,
Changeful and many-weather'd, seem'd to smile
Flashing brief splendour through the clouds awhile, [rain:
Which deepen'd dark anon and fell in
But pleasant is it now to pause, and view
Thy various tints of frail and watery hue,
And think the storm shall not return again.
Such is the smile that Piety bestows
On the good man's pale cheek, when he, in peace
Departing gently from a world of woes,
Anticipates the world where sorrows cease.

1794.

(2) WINTER

[Published in *The Annual Anthology*, 1800.]

A WRINKLED, crabbed man they picture thee,
Old Winter, with a rugged beard as grey
As the long moss upon the apple-tree;
Blue-lipt, an ice-drop at thy sharp blue nose,
Close muffled up, and on thy dreary way,
Plodding alone through sleet and drifting snows.
They should have drawn thee by the high-heapt hearth,
Old Winter! seated in thy great arm'd chair,
Watching the children at their Christmas mirth;
Or circled by them as thy lips declare
Some merry jest or tale of murder dire,
Or troubled spirit that disturbs the night,
Pausing at times to rouse the mouldering fire,
Or taste the old October brown and bright.

Westbury, 1799.

INSCRIPTIONS

[This and the four following inscriptions were numbered respectively XI, XVIII, XXX, XXXIII, and XXXVIII in the Inscriptions as published in the collected edition of 1837–1838.]

(1) IN A FOREST

[First published in *The Morning Post*, April 13, 1799, afterwards in *The Annual Anthology*, 1799, and in *Metrical Tales*, 1805.]

STRANGER! whose steps have reach'd this solitude,
Know that this lonely spot was dear to one
Devoted with no unrequited zeal
To Nature. Here, delighted he has heard
The rustling of these woods, that now perchance
Melodious to the gale of summer move;
And underneath their shade on yon smooth rock,
With grey and yellow lichens overgrown,
Often reclined; watching the silent flow
Of this perspicuous rivulet, that steals
Along its verdant course, . . till all around
Had fill'd his senses with tranquillity,
And ever soothed in spirit he return'd
A happier, better man. Stranger! perchance,
Therefore the stream more lovely to thine eye
Will glide along, and to the summer gale
The woods wave more melodious. Cleanse thou then
The weeds and mosses from this letter'd stone.

Westbury, 1798.

(2) EPITAPH

HERE in the fruitful vales of Somerset
Was Emma born, and here the Maiden grew
To the sweet season of her womanhood
Beloved and lovely, like a plant whose leaf
And bud and blossom all are beautiful.
In peacefulness her virgin years were past;
And when in prosperous wedlock she was given,
Amid the Cumbrian mountains far away
She had her summer Bower. 'Twas like a dream
Of old Romance to see her when she plied
Her little skiff on Derwent's glassy lake;
The roseate evening resting on the hills,
The lake returning back the hues of heaven,

Mountains and vales and waters all imbued
With beauty, and in quietness; and she,
Nymph-like, amid that glorious solitude
A heavenly presence, gliding in her joy.
But soon a wasting malady began
To prey upon her, frequent in attack,
Yet with such flattering intervals as mock
The hopes of anxious love, and most of all
The sufferer, self-deceived. During those days
Of treacherous respite, many a time hath he,
Who leaves this record of his friend, drawn back
Into the shadow from her social board,
Because too surely in her cheek he saw
The insidious bloom of death; and then her smiles
And innocent mirth excited deeper grief
Than when long-look'd-for tidings came at last,
That, all her sufferings ended, she was laid
Amid Madeira's orange groves to rest.
O gentle Emma! o'er a lovelier form
Than thine, Earth never closed; nor e'er did Heaven
Receive a purer spirit from the world.

Keswick, 1810.

(3) AT BARROSA

Though the four quarters of the world have seen
The British valour proved triumphantly
Upon the French, in many a field far-famed,
Yet may the noble Island in her rolls
Of glory write Barrosa's name. For there,
Not by the issue of deliberate plans
Consulted well, was the fierce conflict won,
Nor by the leader's eye intuitive,
Nor force of either arm of war, nor art
Of skill'd artillerist, nor the discipline
Of troops to absolute obedience train'd;
But by the spring and impulse of the heart,
Brought fairly to the trial, when all else
Seem'd, like a wrestler's garment, thrown aside;
By individual courage and the sense
Of honour, their old country's, and their own,
There to be forfeited, or there upheld; . .
This warm'd the soldier's soul, and gave his hand
The strength that carries with it victory.
More to enhance their praise, the day was fought
Against all circumstance; a painful march,
Through twenty hours of night and day prolong'd,
Forespent the British troops; and hope delay'd
Had left their spirits pall'd. But when the word
Was given to turn, and charge, and win the heights,
The welcome order came to them, like rain
Upon a traveller in the thirsty sands.
Rejoicing, up the ascent, and in the front
Of danger, they with steady step advanced,
And with the insupportable bayonet
Drove down the foe. The vanquish'd Victor saw
And thought of Talavera, and deplored
His eagle lost. But England saw well-pleased
Her old ascendency that day sustain'd;
And Scotland, shouting over all her hills,
Among her worthies rank'd another Graham.

(4) EPITAPH

[Published in *The Literary Souvenir*, 1827, under the title of ' A Soldier's Epitaph '.]

STEEP is the soldier's path ; nor are the heights
Of glory to be won without long toil
And arduous efforts of enduring hope ;
Save when Death takes the aspirant by the hand,
And cutting short the work of years, at once
Lifts him to that conspicuous eminence.
Such fate was mine.—The standard of the Buffs
I bore at Albuhera, on that day
When, covered by a shower, and fatally
For friends misdeem'd, the Polish lancers fell
Upon our rear. Surrounding me, they claim'd
My precious charge.—' Not but with life ! ' I cried,
And life was given for immortality.
The flag which to my heart I held, when wet
With that heart's blood, was soon victoriously
Regain'd on that great day. In former times,
Marlborough beheld it borne at Ramilies ;
For Brunswick and for liberty it waved
Triumphant at Culloden ; and hath seen
The lilies on the Caribbean shores
Abased before it. Then too in the front
Of battle did it flap exultingly,
When Douro, with its wide stream interposed,
Saved not the French invaders from attack,
Discomfiture, and ignominious rout.
My name is Thomas: undisgraced have I
Transmitted it. He who in days to come
May bear the honour'd banner to the field,
Will think of Albuhera, and of me.

(5) EPITAPH

[First published in *The Literary Souvenir*, 1828.]

TIME and the world, whose magnitude and weight
Bear on us in this Now, and hold us here
To earth enthrall'd, . . what are they in the Past ?
And in the prospect of the immortal Soul
How poor a speck ! Not here her resting-place,
Her portion is not here ; and happiest they
Who, gathering early all that Earth can give,
Shake off its mortal coil, and speed for Heaven.
Such fate had he whose relics moulder here.
Few were his years, but yet enough to teach
Love, duty, generous feelings, high desires,
Faith, hope, devotion : and what more could length
Of days have brought him ? What, but vanity,
Joys frailer even than health or human life ;
Temptation, sin and sorrow, both too sure,
Evils that wound, and cares that fret the heart.
Repine not, therefore, ye who love the dead.

DEDICATION OF THE AUTHOR'S COLLOQUIES ON THE PROGRESS AND PROSPECTS OF SOCIETY

TO THE
MEMORY OF THE REVEREND
HERBERT HILL,

Formerly Student of Christ Church, Oxford; successively Chaplain to the British Factories at Porto and at Lisbon; and late Rector of Streatham; who was released from this life, Sept. 19, 1828, in the 80th year of his age.

NOT upon marble or sepulchral brass
Have I the record of thy worth inscribed,
Dear Uncle! nor from Chantrey's chisel ask'd
A monumental statue, which might wear
Through many an age thy venerable form.
Such tribute, were I rich in this world's wealth,
Should rightfully be rendered, in discharge
Of grateful duty, to the world evinced
When testifying so by outward sign
Its deep and inmost sense. But what I can
Is rendered piously, prefixing here
Thy perfect lineaments, two centuries
Before thy birth by Holbein's happy hand
Prefigured thus. It is the portraiture
Of More, the mild, the learned, and the good;
Traced in that better stage of human life,
When vain imaginations, troublous thoughts,
And hopes and fears have had their course, and left
The intellect composed, the heart at rest,
Nor yet decay hath touch'd our mortal frame.
Such was the man whom Henry, of desert
Appreciant alway, chose for highest trust;
Whom England in that eminence approved;
Whom Europe honoured, and Erasmus loved.
Such was he ere heart-hardening bigotry
Obscured his spirit, made him with himself
Discordant, and contracting then his brow,
With sour defeature marr'd his countenance.
What he was, in his best and happiest time,
Even such wert thou, dear Uncle! such thy look
Benign and thoughtful; such thy placid mien;
Thine eye serene, significant and strong,
Bright in its quietness, yet brightening oft
With quick emotion of benevolence,
Or flash of active fancy, and that mirth
Which aye with sober wisdom well accords.
Nor ever did true Nature, with more nice
Exactitude, fit to the inner man
The fleshly mould, than when she stampt on thine
Her best credentials, and bestow'd on thee
An aspect, to whose sure benignity
Beasts with instinctive confidence could trust,
Which at a glance obtain'd respect from men,
And won at once good will from all the good.

Such as in semblance, such in word and deed
Lisbon beheld him, when for many a year
The even tenour of his spotless life
Adorn'd the English Church, . . her minister
In that strong hold of Rome's Idolatry,
To God and man approved. What Englishman,
Who in those peaceful days of Portugal
Resorted thither, curious to observe
Her cities, and the works and ways of men,
But sought him, and from his abundant stores
Of knowledge profited ? What stricken one,
Sent thither to protract a living death,
Forlorn perhaps, and friendless else, but found
A friend in him ? What mourners, . . who had seen
The object of their agonizing hopes
In that sad cypress ground deposited,
Wherein so many a flower of British growth,
Untimely faded and cut down, is laid,
In foreign earth compress'd, . . but bore away
A life-long sense of his compassionate care,
His Christian goodness ? Faithful shepherd he,
And vigilant against the wolves, who there,
If entrance might be won, would straight beset
The dying stranger, and with merciless zeal
Bay the death-bed. In every family
Throughout his fold was he the welcome guest,
Alike to every generation dear,
The children's favourite, and the grandsire's friend,
Tried, trusted and beloved. So liberal too
In secret alms, even to his utmost means,
That they who served him, and who saw in part
The channels where his constant bounty ran,
Maugre their own uncharitable faith,
Believed him, for his works, secure of Heaven.
It would have been a grief for me to think
The features, which so perfectly express'd
That excellent mind, should irretrievably
From earth have pass'd away, existing now
Only in some few faithful memories
Insoul'd, and not by any limner's skill
To be imbodied thence. A blessing then
On him, in whose prophetic counterfeit
Preserved, the children now, who were the crown
Of his old age, may see their father's face,
Here to the very life pourtray'd, as when
Spain's mountain passes, and her ilex woods,
And fragrant wildernesses, side by side,
With him I traversed, in my morn of youth,
And gather'd knowledge from his full discourse.
Often in former years I pointed out,
Well-pleased, the casual portrait, which so well
Assorted in all points ; and haply since,
While lingering o'er this meditative work,
Sometimes that likeness, not unconsciously,

Hath tinged the strain; and therefore, for the sake
Of this resemblance, are these volumes now
Thus to his memory properly inscribed.

O friend! O more than father! whom I found
Forbearing alway, alway kind; to whom
No gratitude can speak the debt I owe;
Far on their earthly pilgrimage advanced
Are they who knew thee when we drew the breath
Of that delicious clime! The most are gone;
And whoso yet survive of those who then
Were in their summer season, on the tree
Of life hang here and there like wintry leaves,
Which the first breeze will from the bough bring down.
I, too, am in the sear, the yellow leaf.
And yet, (no wish is nearer to my heart,)
One arduous labour more, as unto thee
In duty bound, full fain would I complete,
(So Heaven permit,) recording faithfully
The heroic rise, the glories, the decline,
Of that fallen country, dear to us, wherein
The better portion of thy days was pass'd;
And where, in fruitful intercourse with thee,
My intellectual life received betimes
The bias it hath kept. Poor Portugal,
In us thou harbouredst no ungrateful guests!
We loved thee well; Mother magnanimous
Of mighty intellects and faithful hearts,..
For such in other times thou wert, nor yet
To be despair'd of, for not yet, methinks,
Degenerate wholly, . . yes, we loved thee well!
And in thy moving story, (so but life
Be given me to mature the gathered store
Of thirty years,) poet and politick,
And Christian sage, (only philosopher
Who from the Well of living water drinks
Never to thirst again,) shall find, I ween,
For fancy, and for profitable thought,
Abundant food.
Alas! should this be given,
Such consummation of my work will now
Be but a mournful close, the one being gone,
Whom to have satisfied was still to me
A pure reward, outweighing far all breath
Of public praise. O friend revered, O guide
And fellow-labourer in this ample field,
How large a portion of myself hath pass'd
With thee, from earth to Heaven!.. Thus they who reach
Grey hairs die piecemeal. But in good old age
Thou hast departed; not to be bewail'd,..
Oh no! The promise on the Mount vouchsafed,
Nor abrogate by any later law
Reveal'd to man,.. that promise, as by thee
Full piously deserved, was faithfully
In thee fulfill'd, and in the land thy days
Were long. I would not, as I saw thee last,
For a king's ransom, have detain'd thee here,..

Bent, like the antique sculptor's limbless trunk,
By chronic pain, yet with thine eye unquench'd,
The ear undimm'd, the mind retentive still,
The heart unchanged, the intellectual lamp
Burning in its corporeal sepulchre.
No; not if human wishes had had power
To have suspended Nature's constant work,
Would they who loved thee have detain'd thee thus,
Waiting for death.
That trance is over. Thou
Art enter'd on thy heavenly heritage;
And I, whose dial of mortality
Points to the eleventh hour, shall follow soon.
Meantime, with dutiful and patient hope,
I labour that our names conjoin'd may long
Survive, in honour one day to be held
Where old Lisboa from her hills o'erlooks
Expanded Tagus, with its populous shores
And pine woods, to Palmella's crested height:
Nor there alone; but in those rising realms
Where now the offsets of the Lusian tree
Push forth their vigorous shoots, . . from central plains,
Whence rivers flow divergent, to the gulph
Southward, where wild Parana disembogues
A sea-like stream; and northward, in a world
Of forests, where huge Orellana clips
His thousand islands with his thousand arms.

LITTLE BOOK, IN GREEN AND GOLD

[Printed by Southey's cousin and son-in-law, Herbert Hill, in *Oliver Newman: With Other Poetical Remains*, in 1845.]

Little Book, in green and gold,
Thou art thus bedight to hold
Robert Southey's Album Rhymes,
Wrung from him in busy times:
Not a few to his vexation,
By importune application;
Some in half-sarcastic strain,
More against than with the grain;
Other some, he must confess,
Bubbles blown in idleness;
Some in earnest, some in jest,
Good for little at the best:
Yet, because his Daughter dear
Would collect them fondly here,
Little Book, in gold and green,
Thou art not unfitly seen
Thus apparell'd for her pleasure,
Like the casket of a treasure.
Other owner, well I know,
Never more can prize thee so.

Little Book, when thou art old,
Time will dim thy green and gold.
Little Book, thou wilt outlive
The pleasure thou wert made to give:
Dear domestic recollections,
Home-born loves, and old affections,
Incommunicable they:
And when these have past away,
As perforce they must, from earth,
Where is then thy former worth?
Other value, then, I ween,
Little Book, may supervene,
Happily if unto some
Thou in due descent shouldst come,
Who would something find in thee
Like a relic's sanctity,

And in whom thou may'st awake,
For thy former owner's sake,
A pious thought, a natural sigh,
A feeling of mortality.

When those feelings, and that race,
Have in course of time given place,
Little worth, and little prized,
Disregarded or despised,
Thou wilt then be bought and sold,
In thy faded green and gold.
Then, unless some curious eye
Thee upon the shelf should spy,
Dust will gather on thee there,
And the worms, that never spare,
Feed their fill within, and hide,
Burrowing safely in thy side,
Till transfigured out they come
From that emblem of the tomb:
Or, by mould and damp consumed,
Thou to perish may'st be doom'd.

But if some collector find thee,
He will, as a prize, re-bind thee;
And thou may'st again be seen
Gayly drest in gold and green.

9th September, 1831.

LINES WRITTEN IN THE ALBUM OF ROTHA QUILLINAN

[Printed, like the preceding poem, with *Oliver Newman*, in 1845].

ROTHA, after long delays,
Since thy book must cross the Raise,
Down I sit to turn a stave,
Be it gay or be it grave.

Wiser wish than what thy name
Prompts for thee I cannot frame;
No where find a better theme
Than thy native namesake stream.
Lovelier river is there none
Underneath an English sun;
From its source it issues bright
Upon hoar Hellvellyn's height,
Flowing where its summer voice
Makes the mountain herds rejoice;
Down the dale it issues then,
Not polluted there by men;
While its lucid waters take
Their pastoral course from lake to lake,
Please the eye in every part,
Lull the ear, and soothe the heart,
Till into Windermere sedate
They flow and uncontaminate.
Rotha, such from youth to age
Be thy mortal pilgrimage;
Thus in childhood blithe and free,
Thus in thy maturity,
Blest and blessing, may it be;
And a course, in welfare past,
Thus serenely close at last.

ODE

WRITTEN DURING THE NEGOTIATIONS WITH BUONAPARTE, IN JANUARY, 1814

[First published in *The Courier*, Feb. 3, 1814, with a number of slight variations from the present text. Republished in *The Times*, April 21, 1814, in its present form.]

1

WHO counsels peace at this momentous hour,
When God hath given deliverance to the oppress'd,
And to the injured power?
Who counsels peace, when Vengeance like a flood
Rolls on, no longer now to be repress'd;
When innocent blood
From the four corners of the world cries out
For justice upon one accursed head;
When Freedom hath her holy banners spread

Over all nations, now in one just cause
United; when with one sublime accord
Europe throws off the yoke abhorr'd,
And Loyalty and Faith and Ancient Laws
Follow the avenging sword!

2

Woe, woe to England! woe and endless shame,
If this heroic land,
False to her feelings and unspotted fame,
Hold out the olive to the Tyrant's hand!
Woe to the world, if Buonaparte's throne
Be suffer'd still to stand!
For by what names shall Right and Wrong be known, . .
What new and courtly phrases must we feign
For Falsehood, Murder, and all monstrous crimes,
If that perfidious Corsican maintain
Still his detested reign,
And France, who yearns even now to break her chain,
Beneath his iron rule be left to groan?
No! by the innumerable dead,
Whose blood hath for his lust of power been shed,
Death only can for his foul deeds atone;
That peace which Death and Judgement can bestow,
That peace be Buonaparte's, . . that alone!

3

For sooner shall the Ethiop change his skin,
Or from the Leopard shall her spots depart,
Than this man change his old flagitious heart.
Have ye not seen him in the balance weigh'd,
And there found wanting? On the stage of blood
Foremost the resolute adventurer stood;
And when, by many a battle won,
He placed upon his brow the crown,
Curbing delirious France beneath his sway,
Then, like Octavius in old time,
Fair name might he have handed down,
Effacing many a stain of former crime.
Fool! should he cast away that bright renown!
Fool! the redemption proffer'd should he lose!
When Heaven such grace vouchsafed him that the way
To Good and Evil lay
Before him, which to choose.

4

But Evil was his Good,
For all too long in blood had he been nurst,
And ne'er was earth with verier tyrant curst.
Bold man and bad,
Remorseless, godless, full of fraud and lies,
And black with murders and with perjuries,
Himself in Hell's whole panoply he clad;
No law but his own headstrong will he knew,
No counsellor but his own wicked heart.
From evil thus portentous strength he drew,
And trampled under foot all human ties,
All holy laws, all natural charities.

5

O France! beneath this fierce Barbarian's sway
Disgraced thou art to all succeeding times;
Rapine, and blood, and fire have mark'd thy way,
All loathsome, all unutterable crimes.

A curse is on thee, France! from far and wide
It hath gone up to Heaven. All lands have cried
For vengeance upon thy detested head!
All nations curse thee, France! for wheresoe'er
In peace or war thy banner hath been spread,
All forms of human woe have follow'd there.
The Living and the Dead
Cry out alike against thee! They who bear,
Crouching beneath its weight, thine iron yoke,
Join in the bitterness of secret prayer
The voice of that innumerable throng,
Whose slaughter'd spirits day and night invoke
The Everlasting Judge of right and wrong,
How long, O Lord! Holy and Just, how long!

6

A merciless oppressor hast thou been,
Thyself remorselessly oppress'd meantime;
Greedy of war, when all that thou couldst gain
Was but to dye thy soul with deeper crime,
And rivet faster round thyself the chain.
O blind to honour, and to interest blind,
When thus in abject servitude resign'd
To this barbarian upstart, thou couldst brave
God's justice, and the heart of human kind!
Madly thou thoughtest to enslave the world,
Thyself the while a miserable slave.
Behold the flag of vengeance is unfurl'd!
The dreadful armies of the North advance;
While England, Portugal, and Spain combined,
Give their triumphant banners to the wind,
And stand victorious in the fields of France.

7

One man hath been for ten long wretched years
The cause of all this blood and all these tears;
One man in this most aweful point of time
Draws on thy danger, as he caused thy crime.
Wait not too long the event,
For now whole Europe comes against thee bent,
His wiles and their own strength the nations know:
Wise from past wrongs, on future peace intent,
The People and the Princes, with one mind,
From all parts move against the general foe:
One act of justice, one atoning blow,
One execrable head laid low,
Even yet, O France! averts thy punishment.
Open thine eyes! too long hast thou been blind;
Take vengeance for thyself, and for mankind!

8

France! if thou lovest thine ancient fame,
Revenge thy sufferings and thy shame!
By the bones which bleach on Jaffa's beach;

By the blood which on Domingo's shore
Hath clogg'd the carrion-birds with gore;
By the flesh which gorged the wolves of Spain,
Or stiffen'd on the snowy plain
Of frozen Moscovy;
By the bodies which lie all open to the sky,
Tracking from Elbe to Rhine the Tyrant's flight;
By the widow's and the orphan's cry;
By the childless parent's misery;
By the lives which he hath shed;
By the ruin he hath spread;
By the prayers which rise for curses on his head;
Redeem, O France! thine ancient fame,
Revenge thy sufferings and thy shame,
Open thine eyes! . . too long hast thou been blind;
Take vengeance for thyself, and for mankind!

9

By those horrors which the night
Witness'd, when the torches' light
To the assembled murderers show'd
Where the blood of Condé flow'd;
By thy murder'd Pichegru's fame;
By murder'd Wright, . . an English name;
By murder'd Palm's atrocious doom;
By murder'd Hofer's martyrdom;
Oh! by the virtuous blood thus vilely spilt,
The Villain's own peculiar private guilt,
Open thine eyes! too long hast thou been blind!
Take vengeance for thyself and for mankind!

Keswick.

BALLADS AND METRICAL TALES

THE MARCH TO MOSCOW

[First published in *The Courier*, June 23, 1814, and afterwards in 1837–1838, among the *Ballads and Metrical Tales*.]

1

The Emperor Nap he would set off
On a summer excursion to Moscow;
The fields were green, and the sky was blue,
Morbleu! Parbleu!
What a pleasant excursion to Moscow!

2

Four hundred thousand men and more
Must go with him to Moscow:
There were Marshals by the dozen,
And Dukes by the score;
Princes a few, and Kings one or two;
While the fields are so green, and the sky so blue,
Morbleu! Parbleu!
What a pleasant excursion to Moscow!

3

There was Junot and Augereau,
Heigh-ho for Moscow!
Dombrowsky and Poniatowsky,
Marshal Ney, lack-a-day!
General Rapp and the Emperor Nap;
Nothing would do
While the fields were so green, and the sky so blue,
Morbleu! Parbleu!
Nothing would do
For the whole of this crew,
But they must be marching to Moscow.

4

The Emperor Nap he talk'd so big
That he frighten'd Mr. Roscoe.
John Bull, he cries, if you'll be wise,
Ask the Emperor Nap if he will please
To grant you peace upon your knees,
Because he is going to Moscow!

He'll make all the Poles come out of their holes,
And beat the Russians and eat the Prussians,
For the fields are green, and the sky is blue,
Morbleu! Parbleu!
And he'll certainly march to Moscow!

5

And Counsellor Brougham was all in a fume
At the thought of the march to Moscow:
The Russians, he said, they were undone,
And the great Fee-Faw-Fum
Would presently come
With a hop, step, and jump unto London.
For as for his conquering Russia,
However some persons might scoff it,
Do it he could, and do it he would,
And from doing it nothing would come but good,
And nothing could call him off it.
Mr. Jeffrey said so, who must certainly know,
For he was the Edinburgh Prophet.
They all of them knew Mr. Jeffrey's Review,
Which with Holy Writ ought to be reckon'd:
It was through thick and thin to its party true;
Its back was buff, and its sides were blue,
Morbleu! Parbleu! [too.
It served them for Law and for Gospel

6

But the Russians stoutly they turned-to
Upon the road to Moscow.
Nap had to fight his way all through;
They could fight, though they could not parlez-vous,
But the fields were green, and the sky was blue,
Morbleu! Parbleu!
And so he got to Moscow.

7

He found the place too warm for him,
For they set fire to Moscow.
To get there had cost him much ado,
And then no better course he knew,
While the fields were green, and the sky was blue,
Morbleu! Parbleu!
But to march back again from Moscow.

8

The Russians they stuck close to him
All on the road from Moscow.
There was Tormazow and Jemalow
And all the others that end in ow;
Milarodovitch and Jaladovitch
And Karatschkowitch,
And all the others that end in itch;
Schamscheff, Souchosaneff,
And Schepaleff,
And all the others that end in eff;
Wasiltschikoff, Kostomaroff,
And Tchoglokoff,
And all the others that end in off;
Rajeffsky and Novereffsky
And Rieffsky,
And all the others that end in effsky;
Oscharoffsky and Rostoffsky,
And all the others that end in offsky;
And Platoff he play'd them off,
And Shouvaloff he shovell'd them off,
And Markoff he mark'd them off,
And Krosnoff he cross'd them off,
And Tuchkoff he touch'd them off,
And Boroskoff he bored them off,
And Kutousoff he cut them off,
And Parenzoff he pared them off,
And Worronzoff he worried them off,
And Doctoroff he doctor'd them off,
And Rodionoff he flogg'd them off.
And last of all an Admiral came,
A terrible man with a terrible name,

A name which you all know by sight very well;
But which no one can speak, and no one can spell.
They stuck close to Nap with all their might,
They were on the left and on the right,
Behind and before, and by day and by night,
He would rather parlez-vous than fight;
But he look'd white and he look'd blue,
Morbleu! Parbleu!
When parlez-vous no more would do,
For they remember'd Moscow.

9

And then came on the frost and snow
All on the road from Moscow.
The wind and the weather he found in that hour
Cared nothing for him nor for all his power;
For him who, while Europe crouch'd under his rod,
Put his trust in his fortune, and not in his God.
Worse and worse every day the elements grew,
The fields were so white and the sky so blue,
Sacrebleu! Ventrebleu!
What a horrible journey from Moscow!

10

What then thought the Emperor Nap
Upon the road from Moscow?
Why, I ween he thought it small delight
To fight all day, and to freeze all night:
And he was besides in a very great fright,
For a whole skin he liked to be in;
And so, not knowing what else to do,
When the fields were so white and the sky so blue,
Morbleu! Parbleu!
He stole away, I tell you true,
Upon the road from Moscow.
'Tis myself, quoth he, I must mind most;
So the Devil may take the hindmost.

11

Too cold upon the road was he,
Too hot had he been at Moscow;
But colder and hotter he may be,
For the grave is colder than Muscovy:
And a place there is to be kept in view
Where the fire is red and the brimstone blue,
Morbleu! Parbleu!
Which he must go to,
If the Pope say true,
If he does not in time look about him;
Where his namesake almost
He may have for his Host,
He has reckon'd too long without him;
If that host get him in Purgatory,
He won't leave him there alone with his glory;
But there he must stay for a very long day,
For from thence there is no stealing away
As there was on the road from Moscow.

Keswick, 1813.

LORD WILLIAM

[First published in *The Morning Post*, March 16, 1798, with the omission of Stanza 23; afterwards in *Poems*, vol. ii, 1799.]

No eye beheld when William plunged
Young Edmund in the stream,
No human ear but William's heard
Young Edmund's drowning scream.

Submissive all the vassals own'd
The murderer for their Lord,
And he as rightful heir possess'd
The house of Erlingford.

The ancient house of Erlingford
Stood in a fair domain,
And Severn's ample waters near
Roll'd through the fertile plain.

And often the way-faring man
Would love to linger there,
Forgetful of his onward road,
To gaze on scenes so fair.

But never could Lord William dare
To gaze on Severn's stream;
In every wind that swept its waves
He heard young Edmund's scream.

In vain at midnight's silent hour
Sleep closed the murderer's eyes,
In every dream the murderer saw
Young Edmund's form arise.

In vain by restless conscience driven
Lord William left his home,
Far from the scenes that saw his guilt,
In pilgrimage to roam;

To other climes the pilgrim fled,
But could not fly despair;
He sought his home again, but peace
Was still a stranger there.

Slow were the passing hours, yet swift
The months appear'd to roll;
And now the day return'd that shook
With terror William's soul;

A day that William never felt
Return without dismay,
For well had conscience kalendar'd
Young Edmund's dying day.

A fearful day was that; the rains
Fell fast with tempest roar,
And the swoln tide of Severn spread
Far on the level shore.

In vain Lord William sought the feast,
In vain he quaff'd the bowl,
And strove with noisy mirth to drown
The anguish of his soul.

The tempest, as its sudden swell
In gusty howlings came,
With cold and death-like feeling seem'd
To thrill his shuddering frame.

Reluctant now, as night came on,
His lonely couch he prest;
And, wearied out, he sunk to sleep, . .
To sleep . . but not to rest.

Beside that couch his brother's form,
Lord Edmund, seem'd to stand,
Such and so pale as when in death
He grasp'd his brother's hand;

Such and so pale his face as when
With faint and faltering tongue,
To William's care, a dying charge,
He left his orphan son.

'I bade thee with a father's love
My orphan Edmund guard; . .
Well, William, hast thou kept thy charge
Take now thy due reward.'

He started up, each limb convulsed
With agonizing fear;
He only heard the storm of night, . .
'Twas music to his ear.

When lo! the voice of loud alarm
His inmost soul appals;
'What ho! Lord William, rise in haste!
The water saps thy walls!'

He rose in haste, beneath the walls
He saw the flood appear;
It hemm'd him round, 'twas midnight now,
No human aid was near.

He heard a shout of joy, for now
A boat approach'd the wall,
And eager to the welcome aid
They crowd for safety all.

'My boat is small,' the boatman cried,
''Twill bear but one away;
Come in, Lord William, and do ye
In God's protection stay.'

Strange feeling fill'd them at his voice
Even in that hour of woe,
That, save their Lord, there was not one
Who wish'd with him to go.

But William leapt into the boat,
His terror was so sore;
'Thou shalt have half my gold,' he cried,
'Haste . . haste to yonder shore.'

The boatman plied the oar, the boat
Went light along the stream;
Sudden Lord William heard a cry
Like Edmund's drowning scream.

The boatman paused, 'Methought I heard
A child's distressful cry!'
''Twas but the howling wind of night,'
Lord William made reply.

'Haste . . haste . . ply swift and strong the oar;
Haste . . haste across the stream!'
Again Lord William heard a cry
Like Edmund's drowning scream.

'I heard a child's distressful voice,'
The boatman cried again.
'Nay, hasten on . . the night is dark . .
And we should search in vain.'

'O God! Lord William, dost thou know
How dreadful 'tis to die?
And canst thou without pity hear
A child's expiring cry?

'How horrible it is to sink
Beneath the closing stream,
To stretch the powerless arms in vain,
In vain for help to scream!'

The shriek again was heard: it came
More deep, more piercing loud;
That instant o'er the flood the moon
Shone through a broken cloud;

And near them they beheld a child;
Upon a crag he stood,
A little crag, and all around
Was spread the rising flood.

The boatman plied the oar, the boat
Approach'd his resting-place;
The moon-beam shone upon the child,
And show'd how pale his face.

'Now reach thine hand!' the boatman cried,
'Lord William, reach and save!'
The child stretch'd forth his little hands
To grasp the hand he gave.

Then William shriek'd; the hands he felt
Were cold and damp and dead!
He held young Edmund in his arms
A heavier weight than lead.

The boat sunk down, the murderer sunk
Beneath the avenging stream;
He rose, he shriek'd, no human ear
Heard William's drowning scream.

Westbury, 1798.

THE WELL OF ST. KEYNE

[First published in *The Morning Post*, Dec. 3, 1798; afterwards in *The Annual Anthology*, 1799, and in *Metrical Tales*, 1805.]

'I know not whether it be worth the reporting, that there is in Cornwall, near the parish of St. Neots, a Well, arched over with the robes of four kinds of trees, withy, oak, elm, and ash, dedicated to St. Keyne. The reported virtue of the water is this, that whether husband or wife come first to drink thereof, they get the mastery thereby.'—*Fuller.*

This passage in one of the folios of the Worthy old Fuller, who, as he says, knew not whether it were worth the reporting, suggested the following Ballad: and the Ballad has produced so many imitations that it may be prudent here thus to assert its originality, lest I should be accused hereafter of having committed the plagiarism which has been practised upon it.

A Well there is in the west country,
And a clearer one never was seen;
There is not a wife in the west country
But has heard of the well of St. Keyne.

An oak and an elm-tree stand beside,
And behind doth an ash-tree grow,
And a willow from the bank above
Droops to the water below.

A traveller came to the Well of St. Keyne;
Joyfully he drew nigh,
For from cock-crow he had been travelling,
And there was not a cloud in the sky.

He drank of the water so cool and clear,
For thirsty and hot was he,
And he sat down upon the bank
Under the willow-tree.

There came a man from the house hard by
At the Well to fill his pail;
On the Well-side he rested it,
And he bade the Stranger hail.

'Now art thou a bachelor, Stranger?' quoth he,
'For an if thou hast a wife,
The happiest draught thou hast drank this day
That ever thou didst in thy life.

'Or has thy good woman, if one thou hast,
Ever here in Cornwall been?
For an if she have, I'll venture my life
She has drank of the Well of St. Keyne.'

'I have left a good woman who never was here,'
The Stranger he made reply,
'But that my draught should be the better for that,
I pray you answer me why?'

'St. Keyne,' quoth the Cornish-man, 'many a time
Drank of this crystal Well,
And before the Angel summon'd her,
She laid on the water a spell.

'If the Husband of this gifted Well
Shall drink before his Wife,
A happy man thenceforth is he,
For he shall be Master for life.

'But if the Wife should drink of it first,..
God help the Husband then!'
The Stranger stoopt to the Well of St. Keyne,
And drank of the water again.

'You drank of the Well I warrant betimes?'
He to the Cornish-man said:
But the Cornish-man smiled as the Stranger spake,
And sheepishly shook his head.

'I hasten'd as soon as the wedding was done,
And left my Wife in the porch;
But i' faith she had been wiser than me,
For she took a bottle to Church.'

Westbury, 1798.

THE BATTLE OF BLENHEIM

[First published in *The Morning Post*, August 9, 1798; afterwards in *The Annual Anthology*, 1800, and in *Metrical Tales*, 1805.]

1

It was a summer evening,
Old Kaspar's work was done,
And he before his cottage door
Was sitting in the sun,
And by him sported on the green
His little grandchild Wilhelmine.

2

She saw her brother Peterkin
Roll something large and round,
Which he beside the rivulet
In playing there had found;
He came to ask what he had found,
That was so large, and smooth, and round.

3

Old Kaspar took it from the boy,
Who stood expectant by;
And then the old man shook his head,
And, with a natural sigh,
''Tis some poor fellow's skull,' said he,
'Who fell in the great victory.

4

'I find them in the garden,
For there's many here about;
And often when I go to plough,
The ploughshare turns them out!
For many thousand men,' said he,
'Were slain in that great victory.'

5

'Now tell us what 'twas all about,'
Young Peterkin, he cries;
And little Wilhelmine looks up
With wonder-waiting eyes;
'Now tell us all about the war,
And what they fought each other for.'

6

'It was the English,' Kaspar cried,
'Who put the French to rout;
But what they fought each other for,
I could not well make out;
But every body said,' quoth he,
'That 'twas a famous victory.

7

'My father lived at Blenheim then,
Yon little stream hard by;
They burnt his dwelling to the ground,
And he was forced to fly;
So with his wife and child he fled,
Nor had he where to rest his head.

8

'With fire and sword the country round
Was wasted far and wide,
And many a childing mother then,
And new-born baby died;
But things like that, you know, must be
At every famous victory.

9

'They say it was a shocking sight
After the field was won;
For many thousand bodies here
Lay rotting in the sun;
But things like that, you know, must be
After a famous victory.

10

'Great praise the Duke of Marlbro' won,
And our good Prince Eugene.'
'Why 'twas a very wicked thing!'
Said little Wilhelmine.
'Nay . . nay . . my little girl,' quoth he,
'It was a famous victory.

11

'And every body praised the Duke
Who this great fight did win.'
'But what good came of it at last?'
Quoth little Peterkin.
'Why that I cannot tell,' said he
'But 'twas a famous victory.'

Westbury, 1798.

THE OLD WOMAN OF BERKELEY, A BALLAD,

SHEWING HOW AN OLD WOMAN RODE DOUBLE, AND WHO RODE BEFORE HER.

[Published in *Poems*, vol. ii, 1799. The history of this ballad is described by Southey in the Preface to the Sixth Volume of the Collected Edition of his Poems (vide pp. 13, 14).]

'A.D. 852. Circa dies istos, mulier quaedam malefica, in villa quae Berkeleia dicitur degens, gulae amatrix ac petulantiae, flagitiis modum usque in senium et auguriis non ponens, usque ad mortem impudica permansit. Haec die quadam cum sederet ad prandium, cornicula quam pro delitiis pascebat, nescio quid garrire coepit; quo audito, mulieris cultellus de manu excidit, simul et facies pallescere coepit, et emisso rugitu, Hodie, inquit, accipiam grande incommodum, hodieque ad sulcum ultimum meum pervenit aratrum. Quo dicto, nuncius doloris intravit; muliere vero percunctata ad quid veniret, Affero, inquit, tibi filii tui obitum et totius familiae ejus ex subita ruina interitum. Hoc quoque dolore mulier permota, lecto protinus decubuit graviter infirmata; sentiensque morbum subrepere ad vitalia, liberos quos habuit superstites, monachum videlicet et monacham, per epistolam invitavit; advenientes autem voce singultiente alloquitur. Ego, inquit, o pueri, meo miserabili fato daemoniacis

semper artibus inservivi; ego omnium vitiorum sentina, ego illecebrarum omnium fui magistra. Erat tamen mihi inter haec mala spes vestrae religionis, quae meam solidaret animam desperatam; vos expectabam propugnatores contra daemones, tutores contra saevissimos hostes. Nunc igitur quoniam ad finem vitae perveni, rogo vos per materna ubera, ut mea tentetis alleviare tormenta. Insuite me defunctam in corio cervino, ac deinde in sarcophago lapideo supponite, operculumque ferro et plumbo constringite, ac demum lapidem tribus cathenis ferreis et fortissimis circundantes, clericos quinquaginta psalmorum cantores, et tot per tres dies presbyteros missarum celebratores applicate, qui feroces lenigent adversariorum incursus. Ita si tribus noctibus secura jacuero, quarta die me infodite humo.

'Factumque est ut praeceperat illis. Sed, proh dolor! nil preces, nil lacrymae, nil demum valuere cathenae. Primis enim duabus noctibus, cum chori psallentium corpori assistebant, advenientes Daemones ostium ecclesiae confregerunt ingenti obice clausum, extremasque cathenas negotio levi dirumpunt; media autem quae fortior erat, illibata manebat. Tertia autem nocte, circa gallicinium, strepitu hostium adventantium, omne monasterium visum est a fundamento moveri. Unus ergo daemonum, et vultu caeteris terribilior et statura eminentior, januas ecclesiae impetu violento concussas in fragmenta dejecit. Divexerunt clerici cum laicis, metu steterunt omnium capilli, et psalmorum concentus defecit. Daemon ergo gestu ut videbatur arroganti ad sepulchrum accedens, et nomen mulieris modicum ingeminans, surgere imperavit. Qua respondente, quod nequiret pro vinculis, Jam malo tuo, inquit, solveris; et protinus cathenam quae caeterorum ferocium daemonum deluserat, velut stuppeum vinculum rumpebat. Operculum etiam sepulchri pede depellens, mulierem palam omnibus ab ecclesia extraxit, ubi prae foribus niger equus superbe hinniens videbatur, uncis ferreis et clavis undique confixus, super quem misera mulier projecta, ab oculis assistentium evanuit. Audiebantur tamen clamores per quatuor fere miliaria horribiles, auxilium postulantes.

'Ista itaque quae retuli incredibilia non erunt, si legatur beati Gregorii dialogus, in quo refert, hominem in ecclesia sepultum, a daemonibus foras ejectum. Et apud Francos Carolus Martellus insignis vir fortitudinis, qui Saracenos Galliam ingressos, Hispaniam redire compulit, exactis vitae suae diebus, in ecclesia beati Dionysii legitur fuisse sepultus. Sed quia patrimonia, cum decimis omnium fere ecclesiarum Galliae, pro stipendio commilitonum suorum mutilaverat, miserabiliter a malignis spiritibus de sepulchro corporaliter avulsus, usque in hodiernum diem nusquam comparuit.'—*Matthew of Westminster.*

This story is also related by Olaus Magnus, and in the *Nuremberg Chronicle.* But William of Malmesbury seems to have been the original authority, and he had the story from an eye-witness. 'When I shall have related it,' he says, 'the credit of the narrative will not be shaken, though the minds of the hearers should be incredulous, for I have heard it from a man of such character *who would swear he had seen it*, that I should blush to disbelieve.'—SHARPE, *William of Malmesbury*, p. 264.

THE Raven croak'd as she sate at her meal,
And the Old Woman knew what he said,
And she grew pale at the Raven's tale,
And sicken'd and went to her bed.

'Now fetch me my children, and fetch them with speed,'
The Old Woman of Berkeley said,
'The Monk my son, and my daughter the Nun,
Bid them hasten or I shall be dead.'

The Monk her son, and her daughter the Nun,
Their way to Berkeley went,
And they have brought with pious thought
The holy sacrament.

The Old Woman shriek'd as they enter'd her door,
And she cried with a voice of despair,
'Now take away the sacrament,
For its presence I cannot bear!'

Her lip it trembled with agony,
The sweat ran down her brow,
'I have tortures in store for evermore,
But spare me, my children, now!'

Away they sent the sacrament,
The fit it left her weak,
She look'd at her children with ghastly eyes,
And faintly struggled to speak.

'All kind of sin I have rioted in,
And the judgement now must be,
But I secured my children's souls,
Oh! pray, my children, for me!

'I have 'nointed myself with infant's fat,
The fiends have been my slaves,
From sleeping babes I have suck'd the breath,
And breaking by charms the sleep of death,
I have call'd the dead from their graves.

'And the Devil will fetch me now in fire,
My witchcrafts to atone;
And I who have troubled the dead man's grave
Shall never have rest in my own.

'Bless, I entreat, my winding sheet,
My children, I beg of you;
And with holy water sprinkle my shroud,
And sprinkle my coffin too.

'And let me be chain'd in my coffin of stone,
And fasten it strong, I implore,
With iron bars, and with three chains,
Chain it to the church floor.

'And bless the chains and sprinkle them,
And let fifty Priests stand round,
Who night and day the mass may say
Where I lie on the ground.

'And see that fifty Choristers
Beside the bier attend me,
And day and night by the tapers' light,
With holy hymns defend me.

'Let the church bells all, both great and small,
Be toll'd by night and day,
To drive from thence the fiends who come
To bear my body away.

'And ever have the church door barr'd
After the even-song;
And I beseech you, children dear,
Let the bars and bolts be strong.

'And let this be three days and nights
My wretched corpse to save;
Till the fourth morning keep me safe,
And then I may rest in my grave.'

The Old Woman of Berkeley laid her down,
And her eyes grew deadly dim,
Short came her breath, and the struggle of death
Did loosen every limb.

They blest the old woman's winding sheet
With rites and prayers due,
With holy water they sprinkled her shroud,
And they sprinkled her coffin too.

And they chain'd her in her coffin of stone,
And with iron barr'd it down,
And in the church with three strong chains
They chain'd it to the ground.

And they blest the chains and sprinkled them,
And fifty Priests stood round,
By night and day the mass to say
Where she lay on the ground.

And fifty sacred Choristers
Beside the bier attend her,
Who day and night by the tapers' light
Should with holy hymns defend her.

To see the Priests and Choristers
It was a goodly sight,
Each holding, as it were a staff,
A taper burning bright.

And the church bells all, both great and small,
Did toll so loud and long;
And they have barr'd the church door hard,
After the even-song.

And the first night the tapers' light
Burnt steadily and clear,
But they without a hideous rout
Of angry fiends could hear;

A hideous roar at the church door
Like a long thunder peal;
And the Priests they pray'd, and the Choristers sung
Louder in fearful zeal.

Loud toll'd the bell, the Priests pray'd well,
The tapers they burnt bright,
The Monk her son, and her daughter the Nun,
They told their beads all night.

The cock he crew, the Fiends they flew
From the voice of the morning away;
Then undisturb'd the Choristers sing,
And the fifty Priests they pray;
As they had sung and pray'd all night,
They pray'd and sung all day.

The second night the tapers' light
Burnt dismally and blue,
And every one saw his neighbour's face
Like a dead man's face to view.

And yells and cries without arise
That the stoutest heart might shock,
And a deafening roaring like a cataract pouring
Over a mountain rock.

The Monk and Nun they told their beads
As fast as they could tell,
And aye as louder grew the noise
The faster went the bell.

Louder and louder the Choristers sung
As they trembled more and more,
And the Priests as they pray'd to heaven for aid,
They smote their breasts full sore.

The cock he crew, the Fiends they flew
From the voice of the morning away;
Then undisturb'd the Choristers sing,
And the fifty Priests they pray;
As they had sung and pray'd all night,
They pray'd and sung all day.

The third night came, and the tapers' flame
A frightful stench did make;
And they burnt as though they had been dipt
In the burning brimstone lake.

And the loud commotion, like the rushing of ocean,
Grew momently more and more;
And strokes as of a battering ram
Did shake the strong church door.

The bellmen, they for very fear
Could toll the bell no longer;
And still as louder grew the strokes
Their fear it grew the stronger.

The Monk and Nun forgot their beads,
They fell on the ground in dismay;
There was not a single Saint in heaven
To whom they did not pray.

And the Choristers' song, which late was so strong,
Falter'd with consternation,
For the church did rock as an earthquake shock
Uplifted its foundation.

And a sound was heard like the trumpet's blast,
That shall one day wake the dead;
The strong church door could bear no more,
And the bolts and the bars they fled;

And the tapers' light was extinguish'd quite,
And the choristers faintly sung,
And the Priests dismay'd, panted and pray'd,
And on all Saints in heaven for aid
They call'd with trembling tongue.

And in He came with eyes of flame,
The Devil to fetch the dead,
And all the church with his presence glow'd
Like a fiery furnace red.

He laid his hand on the iron chains,
And like flax they moulder'd asunder,
And the coffin lid, which was barr'd so firm,
He burst with his voice of thunder.

And he bade the Old Woman of Berkeley rise,
And come with her Master away;
A cold sweat started on that cold corpse,
At the voice she was forced to obey.

She rose on her feet in her winding sheet,
Her dead flesh quiver'd with fear,
And a groan like that which the Old Woman gave
Never did mortal hear.

She follow'd her Master to the church door,
There stood a black horse there;
His breath was red like furnace smoke,
His eyes like a meteor's glare.

The Devil he flung her on the horse,
And he leapt up before, [went,
And away like the lightning's speed they
And she was seen no more.

They saw her no more, but her cries
For four miles round they could hear,
And children at rest at their mothers' breast
Started, and scream'd with fear.

Hereford, 1798.

GOD'S JUDGEMENT ON A WICKED BISHOP

[First published in *The Morning Post*, Nov. 27, 1799; afterwards in *The Annual Anthology*, 1800, and in *Metrical Tales*, 1805.]

'Here followeth the History of HATTO, Archbichop of Mentz.

'It hapned in the year 914, that there was an exceeding great famine in Germany, at what time Otho, surnamed the Great, was Emperor, and one Hatto, once Abbot of Fulda, was Archbishop of Mentz, of the Bishops after Crescens and Crescentius the two and thirtieth, of the Archbishops after St. Bonifacius the thirteenth. This Hatto, in the time of this great famine afore-mentioned, when he saw the poor people of the country exceedingly oppressed with famine, assembled a great company of them together into a Barne, and, like a most accursed and mercilesse caitiffe, burnt up those poor innocent souls, that were so far from doubting any such matter, that they rather hoped to receive some comfort and relief at his hands. The reason that moved the prelat to commit that execrable impiety was, because he thought the famine would the sooner cease, if those unprofitable beggars that consumed more bread than they were worthy to eat, were dispatched out of the world. For he said that those poor folks were like to Mice, that were good for nothing but to devour corne. But God Almighty, the just avenger of the poor folks quarrel, did not long suffer this hainous tyranny, this most detestable fact, unpunished. For he mustered up an army of Mice against the Archbishop, and sent them to persecute him as his furious Alastors, so that they afflicted him both day and night, and would not suffer him to take his rest in any place. Whereupon the Prelate, thinking that he should be secure from the injury of Mice if he were in a certain tower, that standeth in the Rhine near to the towne, betook himself unto the said tower as to a safe refuge and

sanctuary from his enemies, and locked himself in. But the innumerable troupes of Mice chased him continually very eagerly, and swumme unto him upon the top of the water to execute the just judgment of God, and so at last he was most miserably devoured by those sillie creatures; who pursued him with such bitter hostility, that it is recorded they scraped and knawed out his very name from the walls and tapistry wherein it was written, after they had so cruelly devoured his body. Wherefore the tower wherein he was eaten up by the Mice is shewn to this day, for a perpetual monument to all succeeding ages of the barbarous and inhuman tyranny of this impious Prelate, being situate in a little green Island in the midst of the Rhine near to the towne of Bingen, and is commonly called in the German Tongue the MOWSE-TURN.'—*Coryat's Crudities*, pp. 571, 572.

Other authors who record this tale say that the Bishop was eaten by Rats.

THE summer and autumn had been so wet,
That in winter the corn was growing yet,
Twas a piteous sight to see all around
The grain lie rotting on the ground.

Every day the starving poor
Crowded around Bishop Hatto's door,
For he had a plentiful last-year's store,
And all the neighbourhood could tell
His granaries were furnish'd well.

At last Bishop Hatto appointed a day
To quiet the poor without delay;
He bade them to his great Barn repair,
And they should have food for the winter there.

Rejoiced such tidings good to hear,
The poor folk flock'd from far and near;
The great Barn was full as it could hold
Of women and children, and young and old.

Then when he saw it could hold no more,
Bishop Hatto he made fast the door;
And while for mercy on Christ they call,
He set fire to the Barn and burnt them all.

'I'faith 'tis an excellent bonfire!' quoth he,
'And the country is greatly obliged to me,
For ridding it in these times forlorn
Of Rats that only consume the corn.'

So then to his palace returned he,
And he sat down to supper merrily,
And he slept that night like an innocent man;
But Bishop Hatto never slept again.

In the morning as he enter'd the hall
Where his picture hung against the wall,
A sweat like death all over him came,
For the Rats had eaten it out of the frame.

As he look'd there came a man from his farm—
He had a countenance white with alarm;
'My Lord, I open'd your granaries this morn,
And the Rats had eaten all your corn.'

Another came running presently,
And he was pale as pale could be,
'Fly! my Lord Bishop, fly,' quoth he,
'Ten thousand Rats are coming this way, . .
The Lord forgive you for yesterday!'

'I'll go to my tower on the Rhine,' replied he,
''Tis the safest place in Germany;
The walls are high and the shores are steep,
And the stream is strong and the water deep.'

Bishop Hatto fearfully hasten'd away,
And he crost the Rhine without delay,
And reach'd his tower, and barr'd with care
All the windows, doors, and loop-holes there.

He laid him down and closed his eyes; . .
But soon a scream made him arise,
He started and saw two eyes of flame
On his pillow from whence the screaming came.

He listen'd and look'd; . . it was only the Cat;
But the Bishop he grew more fearful for that,
For she sat screaming, mad with fear
At the Army of Rats that were drawing near.

For they have swum over the river so deep,
And they have climb'd the shores so steep,
And up the Tower their way is bent,
To do the work for which they were sent.

They are not to be told by the dozen or score,
By thousands they come, and by myriads and more,
Such numbers had never been heard of before,
Such a judgement had never been witness'd of yore.

Down on his knees the Bishop fell,
And faster and faster his beads did he tell,
As louder and louder drawing near
The gnawing of their teeth he could hear.

And in at the windows and in at the door,
And through the walls helter-skelter they pour,
And down from the ceiling and up through the floor,
From the right and the left, from behind and before,
From within and without, from above and below,
And all at once to the Bishop they go.

They have whetted their teeth against the stones,
And now they pick the Bishop's bones;
They gnaw'd the flesh from every limb,
For they were sent to do judgement on him!

Westbury, 1799.

THE INCHCAPE ROCK

[First published in *The Morning Post*, Oct. 19, 1803. The Ballad was reprinted, with a number of unauthorized variations, in *The Edinburgh Annual Register* for 1810, without Southey's knowledge or consent.]

An old writer mentions a curious tradition which may be worth quoting. 'By east the Isle of May,' says he, 'twelve miles from all land in the German seas, lyes a great hidden rock, called Inchcape, very dangerous for navigators, because it is overflowed everie tide. It is reported in old times, upon the saide rock there was a bell, fixed upon a tree or timber, which rang continually, being moved by the sea, giving notice to the saylers of the danger. This bell or clocke was put there and maintained by the Abbot of Aberbrothok, and being taken down by a sea pirate, a yeare therafter he perished upon the same rocke, with ship and goodes, in the righteous judgement of God.'—STODDART, *Remarks on Scotland.*

No stir in the air, no stir in the sea,
The ship was still as she could be,
Her sails from heaven received no motion,
Her keel was steady in the ocean.

Without either sign or sound of their shock
The waves flow'd over the Inchcape Rock;
So little they rose, so little they fell,
They did not move the Inchcape Bell.

The Abbot of Aberbrothok
Had placed that bell on the Inchcape Rock;
On a buoy in the storm it floated and swung,
And over the waves its warning rung.

When the Rock was hid by the surge's swell,
The mariners heard the warning bell;
And then they knew the perilous Rock,
And blest the Abbot of Aberbrothok.

The Sun in heaven was shining gay,
All things were joyful on that day;
The sea-birds scream'd as they wheel'd round,
And there was joyaunce in their sound.

The buoy of the Inchcape Bell was seen
A darker speck on the ocean green;
Sir Ralph the Rover walk'd his deck,
And he fixed his eye on the darker speck.

He felt the cheering power of spring,
It made him whistle, it made him sing;
His heart was mirthful to excess,
But the Rover's mirth was wickedness.

His eye was on the Inchcape float;
Quoth he, 'My men, put out the boat,
And row me to the Inchcape Rock,
And I'll plague the Abbot of Aberbrothok.'

The boat is lower'd, the boatmen row,
And to the Inchcape Rock they go;
Sir Ralph bent over from the boat,
And he cut the Bell from the Inchcape float.

Down sunk the Bell with a gurgling sound,
The bubbles rose and burst around;
Quoth Sir Ralph, 'The next who comes to the Rock
Won't bless the Abbot of Aberbrothok.'

Sir Ralph the Rover sail'd away,
He scour'd the seas for many a day;
And now grown rich with plunder'd store,
He steers his course for Scotland's shore.

So thick a haze o'erspreads the sky
They cannot see the Sun on high;
The wind hath blown a gale all day,
At evening it hath died away.

On the deck the Rover takes his stand,
So dark it is they see no land.
Quoth Sir Ralph, 'It will be lighter soon,
For there is the dawn of the rising Moon.'

'Canst hear,' said one, 'the breakers roar?
For methinks we should be near the shore.'
'Now where we are I cannot tell,
But I wish I could hear the Inchcape Bell.'

They hear no sound, the swell is strong;
Though the wind hath fallen they drift along,
Till the vessel strikes with a shivering shock,—
'Oh Christ! it is the Inchcape Rock!'

Sir Ralph the Rover tore his hair;
He curst himself in his despair;
The waves rush in on every side,
The ship is sinking beneath the tide.

But even in his dying fear
One dreadful sound could the Rover hear,
A sound as if with the Inchcape Bell,
The Devil below was ringing his knell.

Bristol, 1802.

QUEEN ORRACA
AND
THE FIVE MARTYRS OF MOROCCO

[First published in *The Morning Post*, Sept. 1, 1803. Afterwards published in *The Edinburgh Annual Register* for 1808, and in Ballantyne's *English Minstrelsy*, 1810.]

This Legend is related in the Chronicle of Affonso II, and in the Historia Serafica of Fr. Manoel da Esperança.

1

THE Friars five have girt their loins,
And taken staff in hand;
And never shall those Friars again
Hear mass in Christian land.

They went to Queen Orraca,
To thank her and bless her then;
And Queen Orraca in tears
Knelt to the holy men.

'Three things, Queen Orraca,
We prophesy to you:
Hear us, in the name of God!
For time will prove them true.

'In Morocco we must martyr'd be;
Christ hath vouchsafed it thus:
We shall shed our blood for Him
Who shed his blood for us.

'To Coimbra shall our bodies be brought,
Such being the will divine;
That Christians may behold and feel
Blessings at our shrine.

'And when unto that place of rest
Our bodies shall draw nigh,
Who sees us first, the King or you,
That one that night must die.

'Fare thee well, Queen Orraca!
For thy soul a mass we will say,
Every day as long as we live,
And on thy dying day.'

The Friars they blest her, one by one,
Where she knelt on her knee,
And they departed to the land
Of the Moors beyond the sea.

2

'What news, O King Affonso,
What news of the Friars five?
Have they preach'd to the Miramamolin;
And are they still alive?'

'They have fought the fight, O Queen!
They have run the race;
In robes of white they hold the palm
Before the throne of Grace.

'All naked in the sun and air
Their mangled bodies lie;
What Christian dared to bury them,
By the bloody Moors would die.'

3

'What news, O King Affonso,
Of the Martyrs five what news?
Doth the bloody Miramamolin
Their burial still refuse?'

'That on a dunghill they should rot,
The bloody Moor decreed;
That their dishonour'd bodies should
The dogs and vultures feed:

'But the thunder of God roll'd over them,
And the lightning of God flash'd round;
Nor thing impure, nor man impure,
Could approach the holy ground.

'A thousand miracles appall'd
The cruel Pagan's mind;
Our brother Pedro brings them here,
In Coimbra to be shrined.'

4

Every altar in Coimbra
Is drest for the festival day;
All the people in Coimbra
Are dight in their richest array;

Every bell in Coimbra
Doth merrily, merrily, ring;
The Clergy and the Knights await,
To go forth with the Queen and the King.

'Come forth, come forth, Queen Orraca!
We make the procession stay.'
'I beseech thee, King Affonso,
Go you alone to-day.

'I have pain in my head this morning,
I am ill at heart also:
Go without me, King Affonso,
For I am too faint to go.'

'The relics of the Martyrs five
All maladies can cure;
They will requite the charity
You shew'd them once, be sure:

'Come forth then, Queen Orraca!
You make the procession stay:
It were a scandal and a sin
To abide at home to-day.'

Upon her palfrey she is set,
And forward then they go;
And over the long bridge they pass,
And up the long hill wind slow.

'Prick forward, King Affonso,
And do not wait for me;
To meet them close by Coimbra,
It were discourtesy;

'A little while I needs must wait,
Till this sore pain be gone; . .
I will proceed the best I can,
But do you and your Knights prick on.'

The King and his Knights prick'd up the hill
Faster than before;
The King and his Knights have topt the hill,
And now they are seen no more.

As the King and his Knights went down the hill
A wild boar crost the way;
'Follow him! follow him!' cried the King;
'We have time by the Queen's delay!'

A-hunting of the boar astray
Is King Affonso gone:
Slowly, slowly, but straight the while,
Queen Orraca is coming on.

And winding now the train appears
Between the olive-trees:
Queen Orraca alighted then,
And fell upon her knees.

The Friars of Alanquer came first,
And next the relics past; . .
Queen Orraca look'd to see
The King and his Knights come last.

She heard the horses tramp behind;
At that she turn'd her face:
King Affonso and his Knights came up
All panting from the chase.

'Have pity upon my poor soul,
Holy Martyrs five!' cried she:
'Holy Mary, Mother of God,
Virgin, pray for me!'

5

That day in Coimbra
Many a heart was gay;
But the heaviest heart in Coimbra,
Was that poor Queen's that day.

The festival is over,
The sun hath sunk in the west;
All the people in Coimbra
Have betaken themselves to rest.

Queen Orraca's Father Confessor
At midnight is awake;
Kneeling at the Martyr's shrine,
And praying for her sake.

Just at the midnight hour, when all
Was still as still could be,
Into the Church of Santa Cruz,
Came a saintly company:

All in robes of russet grey,
Poorly were they dight;
Each one girdled with a cord,
Like a Friar Minorite.

But from those robes of russet grey,
There flow'd a heavenly light;
For each one was the blessed soul
Of a Friar Minorite.

Brighter than their brethren,
Among the beautiful band;
Five were there who each did bear
A palm branch in his hand.

He who led the brethren,
A living man was he;
And yet he shone the brightest
Of all the company.

Before the steps of the altar,
Each one bow'd his head;
And then with solemn voice they sung
The Service of the Dead.

'And who are ye, ye blessed Saints?'
The Father Confessor said;
'And for what happy soul sing ye
The Service of the Dead?'

'These are the souls of our brethren in bliss,
The Martyrs five are we:
And this is our father Francisco,
Among us bodily!

'We are come hither to perform
Our promise to the Queen;
Go thou to King Affonso,
And say what thou hast seen.'

There was loud knocking at the door,
As the heavenly vision fled;
And the porter called to the Confessor,
To tell him the Queen was dead.

Bristol, 1803.

BROUGH BELLS

'The church at Brough is a pretty large handsome ancient building. The steeple is not so old, having been built about the year 1513, under the direction of Thomas Blenkinsop, of Helbeck, Esq. There are in it four excellent bells, by much the largest in the county, except the great bell at Kirkby Thore. Concerning these bells at Brough, there is a tradition that they were given by one Brunskill, who lived upon Stanemore, in the remotest part of the parish, and had a great many cattle. One time it happened that his Bull fell a bellowing, which in the dialect of the country is called cruning, this being the genuine Saxon word to denote that vociferation. Thereupon he said to one of his neighbours, "Hearest thou how loud this bull crunes? If these cattle should all crune together, might they not be heard from Brough hither?" He answered, "Yea." "Well, then," says Brunskill, "I'll make them all crune together." And he sold them all, and with the price thereof he bought the said bells (or perhaps he might get the old bells new cast and made larger). There is a monument in the body of the church, in the south wall, between the highest and second window, and in which it is said the said Brunskill was the last that was interred.'—*Nicolson and Burn's History and Antiquities of Westmoreland and Cumberland*, vol. i, p. 571.

One day to Helbeck I had stroll'd
Among the Crossfell hills,
And resting in its rocky grove
Sat listening to the rills;

The while to their sweet undersong
The birds sang blithe around,
And the soft west wind awoke the wood
To an intermitting sound.

Louder or fainter as it rose,
Or died away, was borne
The harmony of merry bells,
From Brough that pleasant morn.

'Why are the merry bells of Brough,
My friend, so few?' said I,
'They disappoint the expectant ear,
Which they should gratify.

'One, two, three, four; one, two, three, four;
'Tis still one, two, three, four.
Mellow and silvery are the tones;
But I wish the bells were more!'

'What! art thou critical?' quoth he;
'Eschew that heart's disease
That seeketh for displeasure where
The intent hath been to please.

'By those four bells there hangs a tale,
Which being told, I guess,
Will make thee hear their scanty peal
With proper thankfulness.

'Not by the Cliffords were they given,
Nor by the Tuftons' line;
Thou hearest in that peal the crune
Of old John Brunskill's kine.

'On Stanemore's side one summer eve,
John Brunskill sate to see
His herds in yonder Borrodale
Come winding up the lea.

'Behind them on the lowland's verge,
In the evening light serene,
Brough's silent tower, then newly built
By Blenkinsop, was seen.

'Slowly they came in long array,
With loitering pace at will;
At times a low from them was heard,
Far off, for all was still.

'The hills return'd that lonely sound
Upon the tranquil air;
The only sound it was, which then
Awoke the echoes there.

'"Thou hear'st that lordly Bull of mine,
Neighbour," quoth Brunskill then;
"How loudly to the hills he crunes,
That crune to him again.

'"Think'st thou if yon whole herd at once
Their voices should combine,
Were they at Brough, that we might not
Hear plainly from this upland spot
That cruning of the kine?"

'"That were a crune, indeed,' replied
His comrade, "which, I ween,
Might at the Spital well be heard,
And in all dales between.

'"Up Mallerstang to Eden's springs
The eastern wind upon its wings
The mighty voice would bear;
And Appleby would hear the sound,
Methinks, when skies are fair."

'"Then shall the herd," John Brunskill cried,
"From yon dumb steeple crune,
And thou and I, on this hill-side,
Will listen to their tune.

'"So while the merry Bells of Brough
For many an age ring on,
John Brunskill will remember'd be,
When he is dead and gone;

'"As one who in his latter years,
Contented with enough,
Gave freely what he well could spare
To buy the Bells of Brough."

'Thus it hath proved: three hundred years
Since then have pass'd away,
And Brunskill's is a living name
Among us to this day.'

'More pleasure,' I replied, 'shall I
From this time forth partake,
When I remember Helbeck woods,
For old John Brunskill's sake.

'He knew how wholesome it would be,
Among these wild wide fells,
And upland vales, to catch, at times,
The sound of Christian bells;

'What feelings and what impulses
Their cadence might convey,
To herdsman or to shepherd boy,
Whiling in indolent employ
The solitary day;

'That when his brethren were convened
To meet for social prayer,
He, too, admonish'd by the call,
In spirit might be there.

'Or when a glad thanksgiving sound,
Upon the winds of Heaven,
Was sent to speak a Nation's joy,
For some great blessing given—

'For victory by sea or land,
And happy peace at length;
Peace by his country's valour won,
And 'stablish'd by her strength;

'When such exultant peals were borne
Upon the mountain air,
The sound should stir his blood, and give
An English impulse there.'

Such thoughts were in the old man's mind,
When he that eve look'd down
From Stanemore's side on Borrodale,
And on the distant town.

And had I store of wealth, methinks,
Another herd of kine,
John Brunskill, I would freely give,
That they might crune with thine.

Keswick, 1828.

INSCRIPTION FOR A COFFEE-POT

[Printed in a note in *Selections, From the Letters of Robert Southey*, ed. J. W. Warter, vol. iv, pp. 203, 204.]

A GOLDEN medal was voted to me
By a certain Royal Society:
'Twas not a thing at which to scoff,
For fifty guineas was the cost thereof:
On one side a head of the king you might see,
And on the other was Mercury!
But I was scant of worldly riches,
And moreover the Mercury had no breeches;
So, thinking of honour and utility too,
And having modesty also in view,
I sold this medal, (why should I not?)
And with the money which for it I got,
I purchased this silver coffee-pot:
Which I trust my son will preserve with care,
To be handed down from heir to heir.
These verses are engraven here,
That the truth of the matter may appear,
And I hope the society will be so wise,
As in future to dress their Mercuries!

SONNETS

[As two of the Sonnets have been inserted among the Selected Minor Poems (pp. 349, 350), and three of those published in 1837–1838 have been omitted, it has been necessary to make some alteration in the numbering of those here printed. Where this has been done the number in brackets ( ) at the head of a sonnet denotes its number in the edition of 1837–1838.

Of the Sonnets printed below, numbers I to IV inclusive (as numbered in the present edition) were published in *Poems*, 1797; the remainder were published in *Metrical Tales*, 1805. Sonnets V, VI, VII, VIII, and XII were included in *The Annual Anthology*, 1799; Sonnets IX, X, XI, XIV, XV, appeared in *The Annual Anthology*, 1800.]

I (IV) CORSTON

As thus I stand beside the murmuring stream
And watch its current, memory here pourtrays
Scenes faintly form'd of half-forgotten days,
Like far-off woodlands by the moon's bright beam
Dimly descried, but lovely. I have worn
Amid these haunts the heavy hours away,
When childhood idled through the Sabbath-day;
Risen to my tasks at winter's earliest morn;
And when the summer twilight darken'd here,
Thinking of home, and all of heart forlorn,
Have sigh'd and shed in secret many a tear.
Dream-like and indistinct those days appear,
As the faint sounds of this low brooklet, borne
Upon the breeze, reach fitfully the ear.

1794.

II (VI)

With many a weary step, at length I gain
Thy summit, Lansdown; and the cool breeze plays
Gratefully round my brow, as hence I gaze
Back on the fair expanse of yonder plain. [eye
'Twas a long way and tedious; to the
Though fair the extended vale, and fair to view
The autumnal leaves of many a faded hue,
That eddy in the wild gust moaning by.
Even so it fared with life: in discontent
Restless through Fortune's mingled scenes I went . .
Yet wept to think they would return no more.
But cease, fond heart, in such sad thoughts to roam;
For surely thou ere long shalt reach thy home,
And pleasant is the way that lies before.

1794.

III (VII)

Fair is the rising morn when o'er the sky
The orient sun expands his roseate ray,
And lovely to the musing poet's eye
Fades the soft radiance of departing day;
But fairer is the smile of one we love,
Than all the scenes in Nature's ample sway,
And sweeter than the music of the grove,
The voice that bids us welcome. Such delight,
Edith! is mine, escaping to thy sight
From the cold converse of the indifferent throng:
Too swiftly then toward the silent night,
Ye hours of happiness, ye speed along,
Whilst I, from all the world's dull cares apart, [heart.
Pour out the feelings of my burthen'd

1794.

IV (VIII)

How darkly o'er yon far-off mountain frowns
The gather'd tempest! from that lurid cloud
The deep-voiced thunders roll, aweful and loud
Though distant; while upon the misty downs [rain.
Fast falls in shadowy streaks the pelting
I never saw so terrible a storm!
Perhaps some way-worn traveller in vain
Wraps his thin raiment round his shivering form,
Cold even as hope within him. I the while
Pause here in sadness, though the sunbeams smile
Cheerily round me. Ah! that thus my lot [sign'd,
Might be with Peace and Solitude assOf
Where I might from some little quiet cot
Sigh for the crimes and miseries of mankind.

1794.

V (IX)

[First published in *The Morning Post*, May 29, 1799.]

O THOU sweet Lark, who in the heaven so high [fully,
Twinkling thy wings dost sing so joy-
I watch thee soaring with a deep delight,
And when at last I turn mine aching eye
That lags below thee in the Infinite,
Still in my heart receive thy melody.
O thou sweet Lark, that I had wings like thee!
Not for the joy it were in yon blue light
Upward to mount, and from my heavenly height
Gaze on the creeping multitude below;
But that I soon would wing my eager flight
To that loved home where Fancy even now
Hath fled, and Hope looks onward through a tear, [here.
Counting the weary hours that hold her

1798.

VI (X)

[First published in *The Morning Post*, May 21, 1799.]

THOU lingerest, Spring! still wintry is the scene, [wear;
The fields their dead and sapless russet
Scarce doth the glossy celandine appear
Starring the sunny bank, or early green
The elder yet its circling tufts put forth.
The sparrow tenants still the eaves-built nest [breast
Where we should see our martin's snowy
Oft darting out. The blasts from the bleak north [blow.
And from the keener east still frequent
Sweet Spring, thou lingerest; and it should be so, . .
Late let the fields and gardens blossom out! [is drest,
Like man when most with smiles thy face
'Tis to deceive, and he who knows ye best, [doubt.
When most ye promise, ever most must

Westbury, 1799.

VII (XI)

[First published in *The Morning Post*, November 23, 1798.]

BEWARE a speedy friend, the Arabian said,
And wisely was it he advised distrust:
The flower that blossoms earliest fades the first. [head,
Look at yon Oak that lifts its stately
And dallies with the autumnal storm, whose rage [it rose,
Tempests the great sea-waves; slowly
Slowly its strength increased through many an age,
And timidly did its light leaves disclose,
As doubtful of the spring, their palest green.
They to the summer cautiously expand,
And by the warmer sun and season bland
Matured, their foliage in the grove is seen,
When the bare forest by the wintry blast
Is swept, still lingering on the boughs the last.

1798.

VIII (XII) TO A GOOSE

[First published in *The Morning Post*, January 10, 1799.]

If thou didst feed on western plains of yore;
Or waddle wide with flat and flabby feet
Over some Cambrian mountain's plashy moor;
Or find in farmer's yard a safe retreat
From gipsy thieves, and foxes sly and fleet; [trace
If thy grey quills, by lawyer guided,
Deeds big with ruin to some wretched race, [sweet,
Or love-sick poet's sonnet, sad and
Wailing the rigour of his lady fair;
Or if, the drudge of housemaid's daily toil,
Cobwebs and dust thy pinions white besoil, [care.
Departed Goose! I neither know nor
But this I know, that we pronounced thee fine, [wine.
Season'd with sage and onions, and port

London, 1798.

IX (XIII)

I marvel not, O Sun! that unto thee
In adoration man should bow the knee,
And pour his prayers of mingled awe and love;
For like a God thou art, and on thy way
Of glory sheddest with benignant ray,
Beauty, and life, and joyance from above. [shroud,
No longer let these mists thy radiance
These cold raw mists that chill the comfortless day;
But shed thy splendour through the opening cloud
And cheer the earth once more. The languid flowers
Lie scentless, beaten down with heavy rain;
Earth asks thy presence, saturate with showers;
O Lord of Light! put forth thy beams again, [hours.
For damp and cheerless are the gloomy

Westbury, 1798.

X (XIV)

[First published in *The Morning Post*, December 28, 1798.]

Fair be thy fortunes in the distant land,
Companion of my earlier years and friend!
Go to the Eastern world, and may the hand [send.
Of Heaven its blessing on thy labour
And may I, if we ever more should meet,
See thee with affluence to thy native shore [greet
Return'd: . . I need not pray that I may
The same untainted goodness as before.
Long years must intervene before that day;
And what the changes Heaven to each may send,
It boots not now to bode: O early friend!
Assured, no distance e'er can wear away
Esteem long rooted, and no change remove [love.
The dear remembrance of the friend we

1798.

XI (XVI)

[First published in *The Morning Post*, August 26, 1799.]

Porlock, thy verdant vale so fair to sight,
Thy lofty hills which fern and furze embrown,
The waters that roll musically down
Thy woody glens, the traveller with delight [grey
Recalls to memory, and the channel
Circling its surges in thy level bay.
Porlock, I also shall forget thee not,
Here by the unwelcome summer rain confined;
But often shall hereafter call to mind
How here, a patient prisoner, 'twas my lot
To wear the lonely, lingering close of day,
Making my Sonnet by the alehouse fire,
Whilst Idleness and Solitude inspire
Dull rhymes to pass the duller hours away.

August 9, 1799.

XII (XVII)

[First published in *The Morning Post*, December 14, 1798.]

STATELY yon vessel sails adown the tide,
To some far distant land adventurous bound;
The sailors' busy cries from side to side
Pealing among the echoing rocks resound:
A patient, thoughtless, much-enduring band,
Joyful they enter on their ocean way,
With shouts exulting leave their native land,
And know no care beyond the present day.
But is there no poor mourner left behind,
Who sorrows for a child or husband there?
Who at the howling of the midnight wind
Will wake and tremble in her boding prayer?
So may her voice be heard, and Heaven be kind!
Go, gallant Ship, and be thy fortune fair!

Westbury, 1799.

XIII (XVIII)

[First published in *The Morning Post*, December 1, 1798.]

O GOD! have mercy in this dreadful hour
On the poor mariner! in comfort here
Safe sheltered as I am, I almost fear
The blast that rages with resistless power.
What were it now to toss upon the waves,
The The madden'd waves, and know no succour near;
The howling of the storm alone to hear,
And the wild sea that to the tempest raves;
To gaze amid the horrors of the night
And only see the billow's gleaming light;
Then in the dread of death to think of her
Who, as she listens sleepless to the gale,
Puts up a silent prayer and waxes pale?..
O God! have mercy on the mariner!

Westbury, 1799.

XIV (XIX)

[First published in *The Morning Post*, August 9, 1799.]

SHE comes majestic with her swelling sails,
The gallant Ship; along her watery way
Homeward she drives before the favouring gales;
Now flirting at their length the streamers play,
And now they ripple with the ruffling breeze.
Hark to the sailors' shouts! the rocks rebound,
Thundering in echoes to the joyful sound.
Long have they voyaged o'er the distant seas,
And what a heart-delight they feel at last,
So many toils, so many dangers past,
To view the port desired, he only knows
Who on the stormy deep for many a day
Hath tost, aweary of his watery way,
And watch'd, all anxious, every wind that blows.

Westbury, 1799.

XV (XX)

FAREWELL my home, my home no longer now,
Witness of many a calm and happy day;
And thou fair eminence, upon whose brow
Dwells the last sunshine of the evening ray,
Farewell! These eyes no longer shall pursue
The western sun beyond the farthest height,
When slowly he forsakes the fields of light.
No more the freshness of the falling dew,
Cool and delightful, here shall bathe my head,
As from this western window dear, I lean,
Listening, the while I watch the placid scene,
The martins twittering underneath the shed.
Farewell, dear home! where many a day has past
In joys whose loved remembrance long shall last.

Westbury, 1799.

LYRIC POEMS

TO CONTEMPLATION

[Published in *Poems*, 1797.]

Καὶ παγᾶς φιλέοιμι τὸν ἐγγύθεν ἦχον ἀκούειν,
Ἃ τέρπει ψοφέοισα τὸν ἀγρικόν, οὐχὶ ταράσσει. MOSCHUS.

FAINT gleams the evening radiance through the sky,
The sober twilight dimly darkens round;
In short quick circles the shrill bat flits by,
And the slow vapour curls along the ground.

Now the pleased eye from yon lone cottage sees
On the green mead the smoke long-shadowing play;
The Red-breast on the blossom'd spray
Warbles wild her latest lay;
And lo! the Rooks to yon high-tufted trees
Wing in long files vociferous their way.
Calm CONTEMPLATION, 'tis thy favourite hour!
Come, tranquillizing Power!

I view thee on the calmy shore
When Ocean stills his waves to rest;
Or when slow-moving on the surges hoar
Meet with deep hollow roar
And whiten o'er his breast;
And when the Moon with softer radiance gleams,
And lovelier heave the billows in her beams.

When the low gales of evening moan along,
I love with thee to feel the calm cool breeze,
And roam the pathless forest wilds among,
Listening the mellow murmur of the trees
Full-foliaged, as they wave their heads on high,
And to the winds respond in symphony.

Or lead me where amid the tranquil vale
The broken streamlet flows in silver light;
And I will linger where the gale
O'er the bank of violets sighs,
Listening to hear its soften'd sounds arise;
And hearken the dull beetle's drowsy flight,
And watch'd the tube-eyed snail
Creep o'er his long moon-glittering trail,
And mark where radiant through the night
Shines in the grass-green hedge the glow-worm's living light.

Thee, meekest Power! I love to meet,
As oft with solitary pace
The ruin'd Abbey's hallowed rounds I trace,
And listen to the echoings of my feet.
Or on some half-demolish'd tomb,
Whose warning texts anticipate my doom,
Mark the clear orb of night
Cast through the ivy'd arch a broken light.

Nor will I not in some more gloomy hour
Invoke with fearless awe thine holier power,
Wandering beneath the sacred pile
When the blast moans along the dark-some aisle,
And clattering patters all around
The midnight shower with dreary sound.

But sweeter 'tis to wander wild
By melancholy dreams beguiled,
While the summer moon's pale ray
Faintly guides me on my way
To some lone romantic glen
Far from all the haunts of men;
Where no noise of uproar rude
Breaks the calm of solitude;
But soothing Silence sleeps in all,
Save the neighbouring waterfall,
Whose hoarse waters falling near
Load with hollow sounds the ear,
And with down-dasht torrent white
Gleam hoary through the shades of night.

Thus wandering silent on and slow,
I'll nurse Reflection's sacred woe,
And muse upon the happier day
When Hope would weave her visions gay,
Ere Fancy, chill'd by adverse fate,
Left sad Reality my mate.

O CONTEMPLATION! when to Memory's eyes
The visions of the long-past days arise,
Thy holy power imparts the best relief,
And the calm'd Spirit loves the joy of grief.

Bristol, 1792.

REMEMBRANCE

[First published in *The Morning Post*, May 26, 1798; afterwards in *The Annual Anthology*, 1799.]

The remembrance of Youth is a sigh.
ALI.

MAN hath a weary pilgrimage
As through the world he wends,
On every stage from youth to age
Still discontent attends;
With heaviness he casts his eye
Upon the road before,
And still remembers with a sigh
The days that are no more.

To school the little exile goes,
Torn from his mother's arms, . .
What then shall soothe his earliest woes,
When novelty hath lost its charms?
Condemn'd to suffer through the day
Restraints which no rewards repay,
And cares where love has no concern,
Hope lengthens as she counts the hours
Before his wish'd return.
From hard controul and tyrant rules,
The unfeeling discipline of schools,
In thought he loves to roam,
And tears will struggle in his eye
While he remembers with a sigh
The comforts of his home.

Youth comes; the toils and cares of life
Torment the restless mind;
Where shall the tired and harass'd heart
Its consolation find?
Then is not Youth, as Fancy tells,
Life's summer prime of joy?
Ah no! for hopes too long delay'd
And feelings blasted or betray'd,
Its fabled bliss destroy;
And Youth remembers with a sigh
The careless days of Infancy.

Maturer Manhood now arrives,
And other thoughts come on,
But with the baseless hopes of Youth
Its generous warmth is gone;
Cold calculating cares succeed,
The timid thought, the wary deed,
The dull realities of truth;
Back on the past he turns his eye,
Remembering with an envious sigh
The happy dreams of Youth.

So reaches he the latter stage
Of this our mortal pilgrimage,
With feeble step and slow;
New ills that latter stage await,
And old Experience learns too late
That all is vanity below.
Life's vain delusions are gone by
Its idle hopes are o'er,
Yet age remembers with a sigh
The days that are no more.

Westbury, 1798.

THE WIDOW

SAPPHICS

[Published in *Poems*, 1797.]

COLD was the night wind, drifting fast the snow fell,
Wide were the downs and shelterless and naked,
When a poor Wanderer struggled on her journey,
Weary and way-sore.

Drear were the downs, more dreary her reflections;
Cold was the night-wind, colder was her bosom:
She had no home, the world was all before her,
She had no shelter.

Fast o'er the heath a chariot rattled by her,
'Pity me!' feebly cried the lonely wanderer;
'Pity me, strangers! lest with cold and hunger
Here I should perish.

'Once I had friends,—though now by all forsaken!
Once I had parents,—they are now in Heaven!
I had a home once—I had once a husband—
Pity me, strangers!

'I had a home once—I had once a husband—
I am a widow, poor and broken-hearted!'
Loud blew the wind, unheard was her complaining,
On drove the chariot.

Then on the snow she laid her down to rest her;
She heard a horseman, 'Pity me!' she groan'd out;
Loud was the wind, unheard was her complaining,
On went the horseman.

Worn out with anguish, toil and cold and hunger,
Down sunk the Wanderer, sleep had seized her senses;
There did the traveller find her in the morning;
GOD had released her.

Bristol, 1795.

THE TRAVELLER'S RETURN

[Published in *The Annual Anthology*, 1799.]

SWEET to the morning traveller
The song amid the sky,
Where twinkling in the dewy light
The skylark soars on high.

And cheering to the traveller
The gales that round him play,
When faint and heavily he drags
Along his noon-tide way.

And when beneath the unclouded sun
Full wearily toils he,
The flowing water makes to him
A soothing melody.

And when the evening light decays,
And all is calm around,
There is sweet music to his ear
In the distant sheep-bell's sound.

But oh! of all delightful sounds
Of evening or of morn,
The sweetest is the voice of Love,
That welcomes his return.

Westbury, 1798.

THE OLD MAN'S COMFORTS

AND HOW HE GAINED THEM

[First published in *The Morning Post*, January 17, 1799; afterwards in *The Annual Anthology*, 1799, and in *Metrical Tales*, 1805.]

YOU are old, Father William, the young man cried,
The few locks which are left you are grey;
You are hale, Father William, a hearty old man,
Now tell me the reason, I pray.

In the days of my youth, Father William replied,
I remember'd that youth would fly fast,
And abused not my health and my vigour at first,
That I never might need them at last.

You are old, Father William, the young man cried,
And pleasures with youth pass away;
And yet you lament not the days that are gone,
Now tell me the reason, I pray.

In the days of my youth, Father William replied,
I remember'd that youth could not last;
I thought of the future, whatever I did,
That I never might grieve for the past.

You are old, Father William, the young man cried,
And life must be hastening away;
You are cheerful, and love to converse upon death,
Now tell me the reason, I pray.

I am cheerful, young man, Father William replied,
Let the cause thy attention engage;
In the days of my youth I remember'd my God!
And He hath not forgotten my age.

Westbury, 1799.

TO A SPIDER

[First published in *The Morning Post*, March 23, 1799; afterwards in *The Annual Anthology*, 1799, and in *Metrical Tales*, 1805.]

1

Spider! thou need'st not run in fear about
To shun my curious eyes;
I won't humanely crush thy bowels out
Lest thou should'st eat the flies;
Nor will I roast thee with a damn'd delight
Thy strange instinctive fortitude to see,
For there is One who might
One day roast me.

2

Thou art welcome to a Rhymer sore perplext,
The subject of his verse;
There's many a one who on a better text
Perhaps might comment worse.
Then shrink not, old Free-Mason, from my view,
But quietly like me spin out the line;
Do thou thy work pursue
As I will mine.

3

Weaver of snares, thou emblemest the ways
Of Satan, Sire of lies;
Hell's huge black Spider, for mankind he lays
His toils, as thou for flies.
When Betty's busy eye runs round the room,
Woe to that nice geometry, if seen!
But where is He whose broom
The earth shall clean?

4

Spider! of old thy flimsy webs were thought,
And 'twas a likeness true,
To emblem laws in which the weak are caught,
But which the strong break through:
And if a victim in thy toils is ta'en,
Like some poor client is that wretched fly;
I'll warrant thee thou'lt drain
His life-blood dry.

5

And is not thy weak work like human schemes
And care on earth employ'd?
Such are young hopes and Love's delightful dreams
So easily destroyed!
So does the Statesman, whilst the Avengers sleep,
Self-deem'd secure, his wiles in secret lay,
Soon shall destruction sweep
His work away.

6

Thou busy labourer! one resemblance more
May yet the verse prolong,
For, Spider, thou art like the Poet poor,
Whom thou hast help'd in song.
Both busily our needful food to win,
We work, as Nature taught, with ceaseless pains:
Thy bowels thou dost spin,
I spin my brains.

Westbury, 1798.

THE EBB TIDE

[First published in *The Morning Post*, June 25, 1799; afterwards in *The Annual Anthology*, 1799, and in *Metrical Tales*, 1805.]

Slowly thy flowing tide
Came in, old Avon! scarcely did mine eyes,
As watchfully I roam'd thy green-wood side,
Perceive its gentle rise.

With many a stroke and strong
The labouring boatmen upward plied their oars,
Yet little way they made, though labouring long
Between thy winding shores.

Now down thine ebbing tide
The unlabour'd boat falls rapidly along;
The solitary helmsman sits to guide,
And sings an idle song.

Now o'er the rocks that lay
So silent late, the shallow current roars;
Fast flow thy waters on their seaward way
Through wider-spreading shores.

Avon! I gaze and know
The lesson emblem'd in thy varying way;
It speaks of human joys that rise so slow,
So rapidly decay.

Kingdoms which long have stood,
And slow to strength and power attain'd at last,
Thus from the summit of high fortune's flood
They ebb to ruin fast.

Thus like thy flow appears
Time's tardy course to manhood's envied stage;
Alas! how hurryingly the ebbing years
Then hasten to old age!

Westbury, 1799.

THE COMPLAINTS OF THE POOR

[First published in *The Morning Post*, June 29, 1798; afterwards in *Poems*, vol. ii, 1799.]

And wherefore do the Poor complain?
The Rich Man ask'd of me; . .
Come walk abroad with me, I said,
And I will answer thee.

'Twas evening, and the frozen streets
Were cheerless to behold,
And we were wrapt and coated well,
And yet we were a-cold.

We met an old bare-headed man,
His locks were thin and white;
I ask'd him what he did abroad
In that cold winter's night;

The cold was keen indeed, he said,
But at home no fire had he,
And therefore he had come abroad
To ask for charity.

We met a young bare-footed child,
And she begg'd loud and bold;
I ask'd her what she did abroad
When the wind it blew so cold;

She said her father was at home,
And he lay sick a-bed,
And therefore was it she was sent
Abroad to beg for bread.

We saw a woman sitting down
Upon a stone to rest,
She had a baby at her back
And another at her breast;

I ask'd her why she loiter'd there
When the night-wind was so chill;
She turn'd her head and bade the child
That scream'd behind, be still;

Then told us that her husband served,
A soldier, far away,
And therefore to her parish she
Was begging back her way.

We met a girl, her dress was loose
And sunken was her eye,
Who with a wanton's hollow voice
Address'd the passers-by;

I ask'd her what there was in guilt
That could her heart allure
To shame, disease, and late remorse;
She answer'd she was poor.

I turn'd me to the Rich Man then,
For silently stood he, . .
You ask'd me why the Poor complain,
And these have answer'd thee!

London, 1798.

TO A FRIEND

INQUIRING IF I WOULD LIVE OVER MY YOUTH AGAIN

[First published in *The Morning Post*, May 27, 1799; afterwards in *The Annual Anthology*, 1799, and in *Metrical Tales*, 1805.]

1

Do I regret the past?
Would I again live o'er
The morning hours of life?
Nay, William! nay, not so!
In the warm joyance of the summer sun
I do not wish again
The changeful April day.
Nay, William! nay, not so!
Safe haven'd from the sea,
I would not tempt again
The uncertain ocean's wrath.
Praise be to Him who made me what I am,
Other I would not be.

2

Why is it pleasant then to sit and talk
Of days that are no more?
When in his own dear home
The traveller rests at last,
And tells how often in his wanderings
The thought of those far off
Hath made his eyes o'erflow
With no unmanly tears;
Delighted he recalls
Through what fair scenes his lingering feet have trod;
But ever when he tells of perils past
And troubles now no more,
His eyes are brightest, and a readier joy
Flows thankful from his heart.

3

No, William! no, I would not live again
The morning hours of life;
I would not be again
The slave of hope and fear;
I would not learn again
The wisdom by Experience hardly taught.

4

To me the past presents
No object for regret;
To me the present gives
All cause for full content.
The future? . . it is now the cheerful noon,
And on the sunny-smiling fields I gaze
With eyes alive to joy;
When the dark night descends,
I willingly shall close my weary lids,
In sure and certain hope to wake again.

Westbury, 1798.

OCCASIONAL PIECES

I

ON A LANDSCAPE OF GASPAR POUSSIN

[Published in *Poems*, 1797.]

GASPAR! how pleasantly thy pictured scenes
Beguile the lonely hour! I sit and gaze
With lingering eye, till dreaming Fancy makes
The lovely landscape live, and the rapt soul
From the foul haunts of herded humankind
Flies far away with spirit speed, and tastes
The untainted air, that with the lively hue
Of health and happiness illumes the cheek
Of mountain Liberty. My willing soul
All eager follows on thy faery flights,
Fancy! best friend; whose blessed witcheries
With cheering prospects cheat the traveller
O'er the long wearying desert of the world.
Nor dost thou, Fancy! with such magic mock
My heart, as, demon-born, old Merlin knew,
Or Alquif, or Zarzafiel's sister sage,
Who in her vengeance for so many a year
Held in the jacinth sepulchre entranced
Lisuart the pride of Grecian chivalry.
Friend of my lonely hours! thou leadest me
To such calm joys as Nature, wise and good,
Proffers in vain to all her wretched sons, . .
Her wretched sons who pine with want amid
The abundant earth, and blindly bow them down
Before the Moloch shrines of Wealth and Power,
Authors of Evil. Well it is sometimes
That thy delusions should beguile the heart,
Sick of reality. The little pile
That tops the summit of that craggy hill
Shall be my dwelling: craggy is the hill
And steep; yet through yon hazels upward leads
The easy path, along whose winding way
Now close embower'd I hear the unseen stream
Dash down, anon behold its sparkling foam
Gleam through the thicket; and ascending on
Now pause me to survey the goodly vale
That opens on my prospect. Half way up
Pleasant it were upon some broad smooth rock
To sit and sun myself, and look below,
And watch the goatherd down yon high-bank path
Urging his flock grotesque; and bidding now
His lean rough dog from some near cliff go drive
The straggler; while his barkings loud and quick
Amid their tremulous bleat arising oft,
Fainter and fainter from the hollow road
Send their far echoes, till the waterfall,
Hoarse bursting from the cavern'd cliff beneath,
Their dying murmurs drown. A little yet

Onward, and I have gain'd the utmost height.
Fair spreads the vale below: I see the stream
Stream radiant on beneath the noontide sky.
A passing cloud darkens the bordering steep,
Where the town-spires behind the castle-towers
Rise graceful; brown the mountain in its shade,
Whose circling grandeur, part by mists conceal'd,
Part with white rocks resplendent in the sun,
Should bound mine eyes, . . ay, and my wishes too,
For I would have no hope or fear beyond.
The empty turmoil of the worthless world,
Its vanities and vices would not vex
My quiet heart. The traveller, who beheld
The low tower of the little pile, might deem
It were the house of God; nor would he err
So deeming, for that home would be the home
Of Peace and Love, and they would hallow it
To Him. Oh, life of blessedness! to reap
The fruit of honourable toil, and bound
Our wishes with our wants! Delightful thoughts,
That soothe the solitude of weary Hope,
Ye leave her to reality awaked,
Like the poor captive, from some fleeting dream
Of friends and liberty and home restored,
Startled, and listening as the midnight storm
Beats hard and heavy through his dungeon bars.

Bath, 1795.

II

WRITTEN ON CHRISTMAS DAY, 1795

[Published in *Letters from Spain and Portugal*, 1797.]

How many hearts are happy at this hour
In England! Brightly o'er the cheerful hall
Flares the heaped hearth, and friends and kindred meet,
And the glad mother round her festive board
Beholds her children, separated long
Amid the wide world's ways, assembled now,
A sight at which affection lightens up
With smiles the eye that age has long bedimm'd.
I do remember when I was a child
How my young heart, a stranger then to care,
With transport leap'd upon this holy-day,
As o'er the house, all gay with ever-greens,
From friend to friend with joyful speed I ran,
Bidding a merry Christmas to them all.
Those years are past; their pleasures and their pains
Are now like yonder convent-crested hill
That bounds the distant prospect, indistinct,
Yet pictured upon memory's mystic glass
In faint fair hues. A weary traveller now
I journey o'er the desert mountain tracks
Of Leon, wilds all drear and comfortless,
Where the grey lizards in the noontide sun
Sport on the rocks, and where the goat-herd starts,
Roused from his sleep at midnight when he hears
The prowling wolf, and falters as he calls
On Saints to save. Here of the friends I think
Who now, I ween, remember me, and fill

The glass of votive friendship. At the name
Will not thy cheek, Beloved, change its hue,
And in those gentle eyes uncall'd-for tears
Tremble? I will not wish thee not to weep;
Such tears are free from bitterness, and they
Who know not what it is sometimes to wake
And weep at midnight, are but instruments
Of Nature's common work. Yes, think of me,
My Edith, think that, travelling far away,
Thus I beguile the solitary hours
With many a day-dream, picturing scenes as fair
Of peace, and comfort, and domestic bliss
As ever to the youthful poet's eye
Creative Fancy fashion'd. Think of me,
Though absent, thine; and if a sigh will rise,
And tears, unbidden, at the thought steal down,
Sure hope will cheer thee, and the happy hour
Of meeting soon all sorrow overpay.

III

WRITTEN AFTER VISITING

THE CONVENT OF ARRABIDA

NEAR SETUBAL

MARCH 22, 1796

[Published in *Letters from Spain and Portugal*, 1797. The original version has been largely rewritten.]

HAPPY the dwellers in this holy house:
For surely never worldly thoughts intrude
On this retreat, this sacred solitude,
Where Quiet with Religion makes her home.
And ye who tenant such a goodly scene,
How should ye be but good, where all is fair,
And where the mirror of the mind reflects
Serenest beauty? O'er these mountain wilds
The insatiate eye with ever new delight
Roams raptured, marking now where to the wind
The tall tree bends its many-tinted boughs
With soft accordant sound; and now the sport
Of joyous sea-birds o'er the tranquil deep,
And now the long-extending stream of light
Where the broad orb of day refulgent sinks
Beneath old Ocean's line. To have no cares
That eat the heart, no wants that to the earth
Chain the reluctant spirit, to be freed
From forced communion with the selfish tribe
Who worship Mammon,—yea, emancipate
From this world's bondage, even while the soul
Inhabits still its corruptible clay, . .
Almost, ye dwellers in this holy house,
Almost I envy you. You never see
Pale Misery's asking eye, nor roam about
Those huge and hateful haunts of crowded men,
Where Wealth and Power have built their palaces,
Fraud spreads his snares secure, man preys on man,
Iniquity abounds, and rampant Vice,
With an infection worse than mortal, taints
The herd of humankind.
I too could love,
Ye tenants of this sacred solitude,
Here to abide, and when the sun rides high
Seek some sequester'd dingle's coolest shade;
And at the breezy hour, along the beach
Stray with slow step, and gaze upon the deep,
And while the breath of evening fann'd my brow,

And the wild waves with their continuous sound
Soothed my accustom'd ear, think thankfully
That I had from the crowd withdrawn in time,
And found an harbour. . . Yet may yonder deep
Suggest a less unprofitable thought,
Monastic brethren. Would the mariner,
Though storms may sometimes swell the mighty waves,
And o'er the reeling bark with thundering crash
Impel the mountainous surge, quit yonder deep,
And rather float upon some tranquil sea,
Whose moveless waters never feel the gale,
In safe stagnation? Rouse thyself my soul!
No season this for self-deluding dreams;
It is thy spring-time; sow, if thou would'st reap;
Then, after honest labour, welcome rest,
In full contentment not to be enjoy'd
Unless when duly earn'd. O happy then
To know that we have walked among mankind
More sinn'd against than sinning! Happy then
To muse on many a sorrow overpast,
And think the business of the day is done,
And as the evening of our lives shall close,
The peaceful evening, with a Christian's hope
Expect the dawn of everlasting day.

Lisbon, 1796.

IV

ON MY OWN MINIATURE PICTURE

TAKEN AT TWO YEARS OF AGE

[Published in *Poems*, 1797.]

And I was once like this! that glowing cheek
Was mine, those pleasure-sparkling eyes; that brow
Smooth as the level lake, when not a breeze
Dies o'er the sleeping surface! . . Twenty years
Have wrought strange alteration! Of the friends
Who once so dearly prized this miniature,
And loved it for its likeness, some are gone
To their last home; and some, estranged in heart,
Beholding me, with quick-averted glance
Pass on the other side. But still these hues
Remain unalter'd, and these features wear
The look of Infancy and Innocence.
I search myself in vain, and find no trace
Of what I was: those lightly arching lines
Dark and o'erhanging now; and that sweet face
Settled in these strong lineaments! . . There were
Who form'd high hopes and flattering ones of thee,
Young Robert! for thine eye was quick to speak
Each opening feeling: should they not have known,
If the rich rainbow on a morning cloud
Reflects its radiant dyes, the husbandman
Beholds the ominous glory, and foresees
Impending storms! . . They augured happily,
That thou didst love each wild and wondrous tale
Of faery fiction, and thine infant tongue
Lisp'd with delight the godlike deeds of Greece
And rising Rome; therefore they deem'd, forsooth,
That thou shouldst tread Preferment's pleasant path.
Ill-judging ones! they let thy little feet
Stray in the pleasant paths of Poesy,
And when thou shouldst have prest amid the crowd,
There didst thou love to linger out the day,
Loitering beneath the laurel's barren shade.
Spirit of Spenser! was the wanderer wrong?

Bristol, 1796.

V

RECOLLECTIONS OF A DAY'S JOURNEY IN SPAIN

[Published in *Letters from Spain and Portugal*, 1797, under the title 'Retrospective Musings'. The original version has been practically rewritten.]

Not less delighted do I call to mind,
Land of Romance, thy wild and lovely scenes,
Than I beheld them first. Pleased I retrace
With memory's eye the placid Minho's course,
And catch its winding waters gleaming bright
Amid the broken distance. I review
Leon's wide wastes, and heights precipitous,
Seen with a pleasure not unmix'd with dread,
As the sagacious mules along the brink
Wound patiently and slow their way secure;
And rude Galicia's hovels, and huge rocks
And mountains, where, when all beside was dim,
Dark and broad-headed the tall pines erect
Rose on the farthest eminence distinct,
Cresting the evening sky.
Rain now falls thick,
And damp and heavy is the unwholesome air;
I by this friendly hearth remember Spain,
And tread in fancy once again the road,
Where twelve months since I held my way, and thought
Of England, and of all my heart held dear,
And wish'd *this* day were come.
The morning mist,
Well I remember, hover'd o'er the heath,
When with the earliest dawn of day we left
The solitary Venta.[1] Soon the Sun
Rose in his glory; scatter'd by the breeze
The thin fog roll'd away, and now emerged
We saw where Oropesa's castled hill
Tower'd dark, and dimly seen; and now we pass'd
Torvalva's quiet huts, and on our way
Paused frequently, look'd back, and gazed around,
Then journey'd on, yet turn'd and gazed again,
So lovely was the scene. That ducal pile
Of the Toledos now with all its towers
Shone in the sunlight. Half way up the hill,
Embower'd in olives, like the abode of Peace,
Lay Lagartina; and the cool fresh gale
Bending the young corn on the gradual slope
Play'd o'er its varying verdure. I beheld
A convent near, and could almost have thought
The dwellers there must needs be holy men,
For as they look'd around them all they saw
Was good.
But when the purple eve came on,
How did the lovely landscape fill my heart!
Trees scatter'd among peering rocks adorn'd
The near ascent; the vale was overspread
With ilex in its wintry foliage gay,
Old cork trees through their soft and swelling bark
Bursting, and glaucous olives, underneath
Whose fertilizing influence the green herb
Grows greener, and with heavier ears enrich'd
The healthful harvest bends. Pellucid streams
Through many a vocal channel from the hills
Wound through the valley their melodious way;
And o'er the intermediate woods descried,
Naval-Moral's church tower announced to us

[1] Venta de Peralbanegas.

Our resting-place that night,—a welcome mark;
Though willingly we loiter'd to behold
In long expanse Plasencia's fertile plain,
And the high mountain range which bounded it,
Now losing fast the roseate hue that eve
Shed o'er its summit and its snowy breast,
For eve was closing now. Faint and more faint
The murmurs of the goatherd's scatter'd flock
Were borne upon the air, and sailing slow
The broad-wing'd stork sought on the church tower top
His consecrated nest. O lovely scenes!
I gazed upon you with intense delight,
And yet with thoughts that weigh the spirit down.
I was a stranger in a foreign land,
And knowing that these eyes should never more
Behold that glorious prospect, Earth itself
Appear'd the place of pilgrimage it is.

Bristol, Jan. 15, 1797.

VI

TO MARGARET HILL

WRITTEN FROM LONDON. 1798.

[Published in *Poems*, vol. ii, 1799, under the title, 'Metrical Letter, Written from London.']

MARGARET! my Cousin, . . nay, you must not smile,
I love the homely and familiar phrase:
And I will call thee Cousin Margaret,
However quaint amid the measured line
The good old term appears. Oh! it looks ill
When delicate tongues disclaim old terms of kin,
Sir-ing and Madam-ing as civilly
As if the road between the heart and lips
Were such a weary and Laplandish way,
That the poor travellers came to the red gates
Half frozen. Trust me, Cousin Margaret,
For many a day my memory hath play'd
The creditor with me on your account,
And made me shame to think that I should owe
So long the debt of kindness. But in truth,
Like Christian on his pilgrimage, I bear
So heavy a pack of business, that albeit
I toil on mainly, in our twelve hours' race
Time leaves me distanced. Loth indeed were I
That for a moment you should lay to me
Unkind neglect; mine, Margaret, is a heart
That smokes not, yet methinks there should be some
Who know its genuine warmth. I am not one
Who can play off my smiles and courtesies
To every Lady of her lap-dog tired
Who wants a play-thing; I am no sworn friend
Of half-an-hour, as apt to leave as love;
Mine are no mushroom feelings, which spring up
At once without a seed and take no root,
Wiseliest distrusted. In a narrow sphere,
The little circle of domestic life,
I would be known and loved: the world beyond
Is not for me. But, Margaret, sure I think
That you should know me well, for you and I
Grew up together, and when we look back
Upon old times, our recollections paint
The same familiar faces. Did I wield
The wand of Merlin's magic, I would make
Brave witchcraft. We would have a faery ship,

Ay, a new Ark, as in that other flood
Which swept the sons of Anak from the earth;
The Sylphs should waft us to some goodly isle
Like that where whilom old Apollidon,
Retiring wisely from the troublous world,
Built up his blameless spell; and I would bid
The Sea-Nymphs pile around their coral bowers,
That we might stand upon the beach, and mark
The far-off breakers shower their silver spray,
And hear the eternal roar, whose pleasant sound
Told us that never mariner should reach
Our quiet coast. In such a blessed isle
We might renew the days of infancy,
And Life like a long childhood pass away,
Without one care. It may be, Margaret,
That I shall yet be gather'd to my friends;
For I am not of those who live estranged
Of choice, till at the last they join their race
In the family-vault. If so, if I should lose,
Like my old friend the Pilgrim, this huge pack
So heavy on my shoulders, I and mine
Right pleasantly will end our pilgrimage.
If not, if I should never get beyond
This Vanity-town, there is another world
Where friends will meet. And often, Margaret,
I gaze at night into the boundless sky,
And think that I shall there be born again,
The exalted native of some better star;
And, like the untaught American, I look
To find in Heaven the things I loved on earth.

VII

HISTORY

[First published in *The Morning Post*, January 16, 1799; afterwards in *The Annual Anthology*, 1800, and in *Metrical Tales*, 1805.]

Thou chronicle of crimes! I'll read no more;
For I am one who willingly would love
His fellow-kind. O gentle Poesy,
Receive me from the court's polluted scenes,
From dungeon horrors, from the fields of war,
Receive me to your haunts, . . that I may nurse
My nature's better feelings, for my soul
Sickens at man's misdeeds!
I spake, when lo!
There stood before me, in her majesty,
Clio, the strong-eyed Muse. Upon her brow
Sate a calm anger. Go, young man, she cried,
Sigh among myrtle bowers, and let thy soul
Effuse itself in strains so sorrowful sweet,
That love-sick Maids may weep upon thy page,
Soothed with delicious sorrow. Oh shame! shame!
Was it for this I waken'd thy young mind?
Was it for this I made thy swelling heart
Throb at the deeds of Greece, and thy boy's eye
So kindle when that glorious Spartan died?
Boy! boy! deceive me not! . . What if the tale
Of murder'd millions strike a chilling pang;
What if Tiberius in his island stews,
And Philip at his beads, alike inspire
Strong anger and contempt; hast thou not risen
With nobler feelings, . . with a deeper love
For freedom? Yes, if righteously thy soul

Loathes the black history of human crimes
And human misery, let that spirit fill
Thy song, and it shall teach thee, boy! to raise
Strains such as Cato might have deign'd to hear,
As Sidney in his hall of bliss may love.

Westbury, 1798.

VIII

WRITTEN IMMEDIATELY AFTER READING THE SPEECH OF ROBERT EMMET

ON HIS TRIAL AND CONVICTION FOR HIGH TREASON, SEPT., 1803

'LET no man write my epitaph; let my grave
Be uninscribed, and let my memory rest
Till other times are come, and other men,
Who then may do me justice.'[1]
Emmet, no!
No withering curse hath dried my spirit up,
That I should now be silent, . . that my soul
Should from the stirring inspiration shrink,
Now when it shakes her, and withhold her voice,
Of that divinest impulse never more
Worthy, if impious I withheld it now,
Hardening my heart. Here, here in this free Isle,
To which in thy young virtue's erring zeal
Thou wert so perilous an enemy,
Here in free England shall an English hand
Build thy imperishable monument;
O, . . to thine own misfortune and to ours,
By thine own deadly error so beguiled,
Here in free England shall an English voice
Raise up thy mourning-song. For thou hast paid
The bitter penalty of that misdeed;
Justice hath done her unrelenting part,
If she in truth be Justice who drives on,
Bloody and blind, the chariot wheels of death.

So young, so glowing for the general good,
Oh what a lovely manhood had been thine,
When all the violent workings of thy youth
Had pass'd away, hadst thou been wisely spared,
Left to the slow and certain influences
Of silent feeling and maturing thought.
How had that heart, . . that noble heart of thine,
Which even now had snapt one spell, which beat
With such brave indignation at the shame
And guilt of France, and of her miscreant Lord,
How had it clung to England! With what love,
What pure and perfect love, return'd to her,
Now worthy of thy love, the champion now
For freedom, . . yea, the only champion now,
And soon to be the Avenger. But the blow
Hath fallen, the indiscriminating blow,
That for its portion to the Grave consign'd
Youth, Genius, generous Virtue. Oh, grief, grief!
Oh, sorrow and reproach! Have ye to learn,
Deaf to the past, and to the future blind,

[1] These were the words in his speech: 'Let there be no inscription upon my tomb. Let no man write my epitaph. No man can write my epitaph. I am here ready to die. I am not allowed to vindicate my character; and when I am prevented from vindicating myself, let no man dare to calumniate me. Let my character and my motives repose in obscurity and peace, till other times and other men can do them justice. Then shall my character be vindicated; then may my epitaph be written. I HAVE DONE.'

Ye who thus irremissibly exact
The forfeit life, how lightly life is staked,
When in distemper'd times the feverish mind
To strong delusion yields? Have ye to learn
With what a deep and spirit-stirring voice
Pity doth call Revenge? Have ye no hearts
To feel and understand how Mercy tames
The rebel nature, madden'd by old wrongs,
And binds it in the gentle bands of love,
When steel and adamant were weak to hold
That Samson-strength subdued!
Let no man write
Thy epitaph! Emmet, nay; thou shalt not go
Without thy funeral strain! O young and good
And wise, though erring here, thou shalt not go
Unhonour'd nor unsung. And better thus
Beneath that indiscriminating stroke,
Better to fall, than to have lived to mourn,
As sure thou wouldst, in misery and remorse,
Thine own disastrous triumph; to have seen,
If the Almighty at that aweful hour
Had turn'd away his face, wild Ignorance
Let loose, and frantic Vengeance, and dark Zeal,
And all bad passions tyrannous, and the fires
Of Persecution once again ablaze.
How had it sunk into thy soul to see,
Last curse of all, the ruffian slaves of France
In thy dear native country lording it!
How happier thus, in that heroic mood
That takes away the sting of death, to die,
By all the good and all the wise forgiven,
Yea, in all ages by the wise and good
To be remember'd, mourn'd, and honour'd still.

Keswick.

IX

VERSES

SPOKEN IN THE THEATRE AT OXFORD, UPON THE INSTALLATION OF LORD GRENVILLE

Grenville, few years have had their course, since last
Exulting Oxford view'd a spectacle
Like this day's pomp; and yet to those who throng'd
These walls, which echo'd then with Portland's praise,
What change hath intervened! The bloom of spring
Is fled from many a cheek, where roseate joy
And beauty bloom'd; the inexorable Grave
Hath claimed its portion; and the band of youths,
Who then, collected here as in a port
From whence to launch on life's adventurous sea,
Stood on the beach, ere this have found their lots
Of good or evil. Thus the lapse of years,
Evolving all things in its quiet course,
Hath wrought for them; and though those years have seen
Fearful vicissitudes, of wilder change
Than history yet had learnt, or old romance
In wildest mood imagined, yet these too,
Portentous as they seem, not less have risen
Each of its natural cause the sure effect,
All righteously ordain'd. Lo! kingdoms wreck'd,
Thrones overturn'd, built up, then swept away
Like fabrics in the summer clouds, dispersed
By the same breath that heap'd them; rightful kings,
Who, from a line of long-drawn ancestry
Held the transmitted sceptre, to the axe
Bowing the anointed head; or dragg'd away
To eat the bread of bondage; or escaped

Beneath the shadow of Britannia's shield,
There only safe. Such fate have vicious courts,
Statesmen corrupt, and fear-struck policy,
Upon themselves drawn down; till Europe, bound
In iron chains, lies bleeding in the dust,
Beneath the feet of upstart tyranny:
Only the heroic Spaniard, he alone
Yet unsubdued in these degenerate days,
With desperate virtue, such as in old time
Hallow'd Saguntum and Numantia's name,
Stands up against the oppressor undismay'd.
So may the Almighty bless the noble race,
And crown with happy end their holiest cause!

Deem not these dread events the monstrous birth
Of chance! And thou, O England, who dost ride
Serene amid the waters of the flood,
Preserving, even like the Ark of old,
Amid the general wreck, thy purer faith,
Domestic loves, and ancient liberty,
Look to thyself, O England! for be sure,
Even to the measure of thine own desert,
The cup of retribution to thy lips
Shall soon or late be dealt! . . a thought that well
Might fill the stoutest heart of all thy sons
With aweful apprehension. Therefore, they
Who fear the Eternal's justice, bless thy name,
Grenville, because the wrongs of Africa
Cry out no more to draw a curse from Heaven
On England!—for if still the trooping sharks
Track by the scent of death the accursed ship
Freighted with human anguish, in her wake
Pursue the chace, crowd round her keel, and dart
Toward the sound contending, when they hear
The frequent carcass from her guilty deck
Dash in the opening deep, no longer now
The guilt shall rest on England; but if yet
There be among her children, hard of heart
And sear'd of conscience, men who set at nought
Her laws and God's own word, upon themselves
Their sin be visited! . . the red-cross flag,
Redeem'd from stain so foul, no longer now
Covereth the abomination.
This thy praise,
O Grenville, and while ages roll away
This shall be thy remembrance. Yea, when all
For which the tyrant of these abject times
Hath given his honourable name on earth,
His nights of innocent sleep, his hopes of heaven;
When all his triumphs and his deeds of blood,
The fretful changes of his feverish pride,
His midnight murders and perfidious plots,
Are but a tale of years so long gone by,
That they who read distrust the hideous truth,
Willing to let a charitable doubt
Abate their horror; Grenville, even then
Thy memory will be fresh among mankind;
Afric with all her tongues will speak of thee,
With Wilberforce and Clarkson, he whom Heaven,
To be the apostle of this holy work,
Raised up and strengthen'd, and upheld through all
His arduous toil. To end the glorious task,
That blessed, that redeeming deed was thine:
Be it thy pride in life, thy thought in death,

Thy praise beyond the tomb. The statesman's fame
Will fade, the conqueror's laurel crown grow sere;
Fame's loudest trump upon the ear of Time
Leaves but a dying echo; they alone
Are held in everlasting memory,
Whose deeds partake of heaven. Long ages hence,
Nations unborn, in cities that shall rise
Along the palmy coast, will bless thy name;
And Senegal and secret Niger's shore,
And Calabar, no longer startled then
With sounds of murder, will, like Isis now,
Ring with the songs that tell of Grenville's praise.

Keswick, 1810.

X

THANKSGIVING FOR VICTORY

[Written for Music, and composed by Shield.]

GLORY to Thee in thine omnipotence,
O Lord, who art our shield and our defence,
And dost dispense,
As seemeth best to thine unerring will
(Which passeth mortal sense),
The lot of Victory still;
Edging sometimes with might the sword unjust;
And bowing to the dust
The rightful cause, that so much seeming ill
May thine appointed purposes fulfil;
Sometimes, as in this late auspicious hour
For which our hymns we raise,
Making the wicked feel thy present power;
Glory to thee and praise,
Almighty God, by whom our strength was given!
Glory to thee, O Lord of Earth and Heaven!

Keswick, 1815.

XI

STANZAS

WRITTEN IN LADY LONSDALE'S ALBUM, AT LOWTHER CASTLE, OCTOBER 13, 1821

[First published in Joanna Baillie's *A Collection of Poems, chiefly Manuscript*, in 1823.]

1

SOMETIMES in youthful years,
When in some ancient ruin I have stood,
Alone and musing, till with quiet tears
I felt my cheeks bedew'd,
A melancholy thought hath made me grieve
For this our age, and humbled me in mind,
That it should pass away and leave
No monuments behind.

2

Not for themselves alone
Our fathers lived; nor with a niggard hand
Raised they the fabrics of enduring stone,
Which yet adorn the land;
Their piles, memorials of the mighty dead,
Survive them still, majestic in decay;
But ours are like ourselves, I said,
The creatures of a day.

3

With other feelings now,
Lowther! have I beheld thy stately walls,
Thy pinnacles, and broad embattled brow,
And hospitable halls.
The sun those wide-spread battlements shall crest,
And silent years unharming shall go by
Till centuries in their course invest
Thy towers with sanctity.

4

But thou the while shalt bear,
To after-times, an old and honour'd name,
And to remote posterity declare
Thy Founder's virtuous fame.
Fair structure! worthy the triumphant age
Of glorious England's opulence and power,
Peace be thy lasting heritage,
And happiness thy dower!

XII

STANZAS

ADDRESSED TO W. R. TURNER, ESQ., R.A., ON HIS VIEW OF THE LAGO MAGGIORE FROM THE TOWN OF ARONA

[First published in *The Keepsake*, 1829.]

1

TURNER, thy pencil brings to mind a day
When from Laveno and the Beuscer hill
I over Lake Verbanus held my way
In pleasant fellowship, with wind at will;
Smooth were the waters wide, the sky serene,
And our hearts gladden'd with the joyful scene;

2

Joyful, . . for all things minister'd delight, . .
The lake and land, the mountains and the vales;
The Alps their snowy summits rear'd in light,
Tempering with gelid breath the summer gales;
And verdant shores and woods refresh'd the eye
That else had ached beneath that brilliant sky.

3

To that elaborate island were we bound
Of yore the scene of Borromean pride, . .
Folly's prodigious work; where all around,
Under its coronet and self-belied,
Look where you will, you cannot choose but see
The obtrusive motto's proud 'HUMILITY!'

4

Far off the Borromean saint was seen,
Distinct though distant, o'er his native town,
Where his Colossus with benignant mien
Looks from its station on Arona down:
To it the inland sailor lifts his eyes,
From the wide lake, when perilous storms arise.

5

But no storm threaten'd on that summer-day;
The whole rich scene appear'd for joyance made;
With many a gliding bark the mere was gay,
The fields and groves in all their wealth array'd;
I could have thought the Sun beheld with smiles
Those towns and palaces and populous isles.

6

From fair Arona, even on such a day,
When gladness was descending like a shower,
Great painter, did thy gifted eye survey
The splendid scene; and, conscious of its power,
Well hath thine hand inimitable given
The glories of the lake, and land, and heaven.

Keswick, 1828.

XIII

ON A PICTURE BY J. M. WRIGHT, ESQ.

[First published in *The Keepsake* for 1829, under the title of ' Lucy and her Bird '.]

1

THE sky-lark hath perceived his prison-door
Unclosed; for liberty the captive tries:
Puss eagerly hath watched him from the floor,
And in her grasp he flutters, pants, and dies.

2

Lucy's own Puss, and Lucy's own dear Bird,
Her foster'd favourites both for many a day,
That which the tender-hearted girl preferr'd,
She in her fondness knew not sooth to say.

3

For if the sky-lark's pipe were shrill and strong,
And its rich tones the thrilling ear might please,
Yet Pussybel could breathe a fireside song
As winning, when she lay on Lucy's knees.

4

Both knew her voice, and each alike would seek
Her eye, her smile, her fondling touch to gain:
How faintly then may words her sorrow speak,
When by the one she sees the other [slain.

5

The flowers fall scatter'd from her lifted hands;
A cry of grief she utters in affright;
And self-condemn'd for negligence she stands
Aghast and helpless at the cruel sight.

6

Come, Lucy, let me dry those tearful eyes;
Take thou, dear child, a lesson not unholy
From one whom nature taught to moralize
Both in his mirth and in his melancholy.

7

I will not warn thee not to set thy heart
Too fondly upon perishable things;
In vain the earnest preacher spends his art
Upon that theme; in vain the poet sings.

8

It is our nature's strong necessity,
And this the soul's unerring instincts tell:
Therefore I say, let us love worthily,
Dear child, and then we cannot love too well.

9

Better it is all losses to deplore,
Which dutiful affection can sustain,
Than that the heart should, in its inmost core,
Harden without it, and have lived in vain.

10

This love which thou hast lavish'd, and the woe
Which makes thy lip now quiver with distress,
Are but a vent, an innocent overflow,
From the deep springs of female tenderness.

11

And something I would teach thee from the grief
That thus hath fill'd those gentle eyes with tears,
The which may be thy sober, sure relief
When sorrow visits thee in after years.

12

I ask not whither is the spirit flown
That lit the eye which there in death is seal'd;
Our Father hath not made that mystery known;
Needless the knowledge, therefore not reveal'd.

13

But didst thou know in sure and sacred truth,
It had a place assign'd in yonder skies,
There through an endless life of joyous youth,
To warble in the bowers of Paradise;

14

Lucy, if then the power to thee were given
In that cold form its life to re-engage,
Wouldst thou call back the warbler from its Heaven,
To be again the tenant of a cage?

15

Only that thou might'st cherish it again,
Wouldst thou the object of thy love recall
To mortal life, and chance, and change, and pain,
And death, which must be suffered once by all?

16

Oh, no, thou say'st: oh, surely not, not so!
I read the answer which those looks express:
For pure and true affection well I know
Leaves in the heart no room for selfishness.

17

Such love of all our virtues is the gem;
We bring with us the immortal seed at birth:
Of heaven it is, and heavenly; woe to them
Who make it wholly earthly and of earth!

18

What we love perfectly, for its own sake
We love and not our own, being ready thus
Whate'er self-sacrifice is ask'd, to make;
That which is best for it, is best for us.

19

O Lucy! treasure up that pious thought!
It hath a balm for sorrow's deadliest darts;
And with true comfort thou wilt find it fraught,
If grief should reach thee in thy heart of hearts.

Buckland, 1828.

XIV

TO CHARLES LAMB

ON THE REVIEWAL OF HIS 'ALBUM VERSES' IN 'THE LITERARY GAZETTE'

[Published in *The Times*, August 6, 1830.]

Charles Lamb, to those who know thee justly dear
For rarest genius, and for sterling worth,
Unchanging friendship, warmth of heart sincere,
And wit that never gave an ill thought birth,
Nor ever in its sport infix'd a sting;
To us, who have admired and loved thee long,
It is a proud as well as pleasant thing
To hear thy good report, now borne along
Upon the honest breath of public praise:
We know that with the elder sons of song,
In honouring whom thou hast delighted still,
Thy name shall keep its course to after days.
The empty pertness, and the vulgar wrong,
The flippant folly, the malicious will,

Which have assailed thee, now, or heretofore,
Find, soon or late, their proper meed of shame;
The more thy triumph, and our pride the more,
When witling critics to the world proclaim,
In lead, their own dolt incapacity.
Matter it is of mirthful memory
To think, when thou wert early in the field,
How doughtily small Jeffrey ran at thee
A-tilt, and broke a bulrush on thy shield.
And now, a veteran in the lists of fame,
I ween, old Friend! thou art not worse bested
When with a maudlin eye and drunken aim [head.
Dulness hath thrown *a jerdan* at thy

THE RETROSPECT

[Published in *Poems by Robert Lovell and Robert Southey*, 1795. In its present form the poem has been completely rewritten.]

On as I journey through the vale of years,
By hopes enliven'd, or deprest by fears,
Allow me, Memory, in thy treasured store,
To view the days that will return no more.
And yes! before thine intellectual ray,
The clouds of mental darkness melt away!
As when, at earliest day's awakening dawn,
The hovering mists obscure the dewy lawn,
O'er all the landscape spread their influence chill,
Hang o'er the vale and wood, and hide the hill,
Anon, slow-rising, comes the orb of day,
Slow fade the shadowy mists and roll away,
The prospect opens on the traveller's sight,
And hills and vales and woods reflect the living light.

O thou, the mistress of my future days,
Accept thy minstrel's retrospective lays;
To whom the minstrel and the lyre belong,
Accept, my Edith, Memory's pensive song.
Of long-past days I sing, ere yet I knew
Or thought and grief, or happiness and you;
Ere yet my infant heart had learnt to prove
The cares of life, the hopes and fears of love.

Corston, twelve years in various fortunes fled
Have pass'd with restless progress o'er my head,
Since in thy vale beneath the master's rule
I dwelt an inmate of the village school.
Yet still will Memory's busy eye retrace
Each little vestige of the well-known place;
Each wonted haunt and scene of youthful joy,
Where merriment has cheer'd the careless boy;
Well-pleased will fancy still the spot survey
Where once he triumph'd in the boyish play,
Without one care where every morn he rose,
Where every evening sunk to calm repose.

Large was the house, though fallen in course of fate
From its old grandeur and manorial state. [Squire
Lord of the manor, here the jovial
Once called his tenants round the crackling fire;
Here while the glow of joy suffused his face,
He told his ancient exploits in the chase,
And, proud his rival sportsmen to surpass,
He lit again the pipe, and fill'd again the glass.

But now no more was heard at early morn [horn;
The echoing clangor of the huntsman's
No more the eager hounds with deepening cry
Leapt round him as they knew their pastime nigh;
The Squire no more obey'd the morning call,
Nor favourite spaniels fill'd the sportsman's hall;
For he, the last descendant of his race,
Slept with his fathers, and forgot the chase.
There now in petty empire o'er the school
The mighty master held despotic rule;
Trembling in silence all his deeds we saw, [law;
His look a mandate, and his word a
Severe his voice, severe and stern his mien,
And wondrous strict he was, and wondrous wise, I ween.

Even now through many a long long year I trace
The hour when first with awe I view'd his face;
Even now recall my entrance at the dome, . .
'Twas the first day I ever left my home!
Years intervening have not worn away
The deep remembrance of that wretched day,
Nor taught me to forget my earliest fears, [tears;
A mother's fondness, and a mother's
When close she prest me to her sorrowing heart,
As loth as even I myself to part;
And I, as I beheld her sorrows flow,
With painful effort hid my inward woe.

But time to youthful troubles brings relief,
And each new object weans the child from grief.
Like April showers the tears of youth descend, [end,
Suddenly they fall, and suddenly they
And fresher pleasure cheers the following hour,
As brighter shines the sun after the April shower.

Methinks even now the interview I see,
The Mistress's glad smile, the Master's glee;
Much of my future happiness they said,
Much of the easy life the scholars led,
Of spacious play-ground and of wholesome air,
The best instruction and the tenderest care;
And when I followed to the garden-door
My father, till through tears I saw no more, . .
How civilly they sooth'd my parting pain,
And never did they speak so civilly again.

Why loves the soul on earlier years to dwell,
When Memory spreads around her saddening spell,
When discontent, with sullen gloom o'ercast,
Turns from the present and prefers the past?
Why calls reflection to my pensive view
Each trifling act of infancy anew,

Each trifling act with pleasure pondering o'er,
Even at the time when trifles please no more ?
Yet is remembrance sweet, though well I know [woe ;
The days of childhood are but days of
Some rude restraint, some petty tyrant sours
What else should be our sweetest blithest hours ;
Yet is it sweet to call those hours to mind, . .
Those easy hours for ever left behind ;
Ere care began the spirit to oppress,
When ignorance itself was happiness.

Such was my state in those remember'd years
When two small acres bounded all my fears ; [call
And therefore still with pleasure I re-
The tapestried school, the bright brown-boarded hall,
The murmuring brook, that every morning saw
The due observance of the cleanly law ;
The walnuts, where, when favour would allow,
Full oft I went to search each well-stript bough ;
The crab-tree, which supplied a secret hoard
With roasted crabs to deck the wintry board ;
These trifling objects then my heart possest,
These trifling objects still remain imprest ; [hind
So when with unskill'd hand some idle
Carves his rude name within a sapling's rind,
In after years the peasant lives to see
The expanding letters grow as grows the tree ;
Though every winter's desolating sway
Shake the hoarse grove and sweep the leaves away, [last,
That rude inscription uneffaced will
Unalter'd by the storm or wintry blast.

Oh while well pleased the letter'd traveller roams
Among old temples, palaces, and domes,
Strays with the Arab o'er the wreck of time
Where erst Palmyra's towers arose sublime, [pride,
Or marks the lazy Turk's lethargic
And Grecian slavery on Ilyssus' side,
Oh be it mine, aloof from public strife,
To mark the changes of domestic life,
The alter'd scenes where once I bore a part,
Where every change of fortune strikes the heart ;
As when the merry bells with echoing sound
Proclaim the news of victory around,
Rejoicing patriots run the news to spread
Of glorious conquest and of thousands dead,
All join the loud huzzah with eager breath,
And triumph in the tale of blood and death ;
But if extended on the battle-plain,
Cut off in conquest some dear friend be slain, [eye,
Affection then will fill the sorrowing
And suffering Nature grieve that one should die.

Cold was the morn, and bleak the wintry blast
Blew o'er the meadow, when I saw thee last.
My bosom bounded as I wander'd round
With silent step the long-remember'd ground, [hour,
Where I had loiter'd out so many an
Chased the gay butterfly, and cull'd the flower,
Sought the swift arrow's erring course to trace,
Or with mine equals vied amid the chase. [away
I saw the church where I had slept
The tedious service of the summer day ;

Or, hearing sadly all the preacher told,
In winter waked and shiver'd with the cold.
Oft have my footsteps roam'd the sacred ground
Where heroes, kings, and poets sleep around;
Oft traced the mouldering castle's ivied wall,
Or aged convent tottering to its fall;
Yet never had my bosom felt such pain, [again;
As, Corston, when I saw thy scenes
For many a long-lost pleasure came to view,
For many a long-past sorrow rose anew;
Where whilom all were friends I stood alone, [known.
Unknowing all I saw, of all I saw un-

There, where my little hands were wont to rear
With pride the earliest salad of the year;
Where never idle weed to spring was seen,
Rank thorns and nettles rear'd their heads obscene.
Still all around and sad, I saw no more
The playful group, nor heard the playful roar;
There echoed round no shout of mirth and glee,
It seem'd as though the world were changed like me!

Enough! it boots not on the past to dwell, . . [well!
Fair scene of other years, a long fare-
Rouse up, my soul! it boots not to repine,
Rouse up! for worthier feelings should be thine;
Thy path is plain and straight, . . that light is given, . .
Onward in faith, . . and leave the rest to Heaven.

Oxford, 1794.

HYMN TO THE PENATES

'Remove far from me vanity and lies; give me neither poverty nor riches; feed me with food convenient for me.'—THE WORDS OF AGUR.

ΟΙΚΟΙ *βέλτερον εἶναι, ἐπεὶ βλαβερὸν τὸ θύρηφι.*—HESIOD.

[Published in *Poems*, 1797.]

YET one Song more! one high and solemn strain
Ere, Phoebus! on thy temple's ruin'd wall
I hang the silent harp: there may its strings,
When the rude tempest shakes the aged pile,
Make melancholy music. One song more!
PENATES, hear me! for to you I hymn
The votive lay; whether, as sages deem,
Ye dwell in inmost Heaven, the Counsellors
Of Jove; or if, Supreme of Deities,
All things are yours, and in your holy train
Jove proudly ranks, and Juno, white-arm'd Queen,
And wisest of Immortals, the dread Maid
Athenian Pallas. Venerable Powers,
Hearken your hymn of praise! Though from your rites
Estranged, and exiled from your altars long,
I have not ceased to love you, Household Gods!
In many a long and melancholy hour
Of solitude and sorrow, hath my heart
With earnest longings pray'd to rest at length
Beside your hallow'd hearth, . . for Peace is there!
Yes, I have loved you long! I call on ye
Yourselves to witness with what holy joy,

Shunning the common herd of humankind,
I have retired to watch your lonely fires
And commune with myself: . . delightful hours,
That gave mysterious pleasure, made me know
Mine inmost heart, its weakness and its strength,
Taught me to cherish with devoutest care
Its deep unworldly feelings, taught me too
The best of lessons—*to respect myself*.

Nor have I ever ceased to reverence you,
Domestic Deities! from the first dawn
Of reason, through the adventurous paths of youth
Even to this better day, when on mine ear
The uproar of contending nations sounds
But like the passing wind, and wakes no pulse
To tumult. When a child . . (for still I love
To dwell with fondness on my childish years,)
When first, a little one, I left my home,
I can remember the first grief I felt,
And the first painful smile that clothed my front
With feelings not its own: sadly at night
I sat me down beside a stranger's hearth;
And when the lingering hour of rest was come,
First wet with tears my pillow. As I grew
In years and knowledge, and the course of time
Developed the young feelings of my heart,
When most I loved in solitude to rove
Amid the woodland gloom; or where the rocks
Darken'd old Avon's stream, in the ivied cave
Recluse to sit and brood the future song, . .
Yet not the less, PENATES, loved I then
Your altars; not the less at evening hour
Loved I beside the well-trimm'd fire to sit,
Absorb'd in many a dear deceitful dream
Of visionary joys, . . deceitful dreams, . .
And yet not vain; for painting purest bliss,
They form'd to Fancy's mould her votary's heart.

By Cherwell's sedgey side, and in the meads
Where Isis in her calm clear stream reflects
The willow's bending boughs, at early dawn,
In the noon-tide hour, and when the night-mist rose,
I have remember'd you; and when the noise
Of lewd Intemperance on my lonely ear
Burst with loud tumult, as recluse I sate,
Musing on days when man should be redeem'd
From servitude, and vice, and wretchedness,
I bless'd you, Household Gods! because I loved
Your peaceful altars and serener rites.
Nor did I cease to reverence you, when driven
Amid the jarring crowd, an unfit man
To mingle with the world; still, still my heart
Sigh'd for your sanctuary, and inly pined;
And loathing human converse, I have stray'd
Where o'er the sea-beach chilly howl'd the blast,
And gazed upon the world of waves, and wish'd
That I were far beyond the Atlantic deep,
In woodland haunts, a sojourner with Peace.

Not idly did the ancient poets dream,
Who peopled earth with Deities. They trod
The wood with reverence where the Dryads dwelt;
At day's dim dawn or evening's misty hour

They saw the Oreads on their mountain haunts,
And felt their holy influence; nor impure
Of thought, nor ever with polluted hands,
Touch'd they without a prayer the Naiad's spring;
Nor without reverence to the River God
Cross'd in unhappy hour his limpid stream.
Yet was this influence transient; such brief awe
Inspiring as the thunder's long loud peal
Strikes to the feeble spirit. Household Gods,
Not such your empire! in your votaries' breasts
No momentary impulse ye awake;
Nor fleeting, like their local energies,
The deep devotion that your fanes impart.
O ye whom Youth has wilder'd on your way,
Or Pleasure with her syren song hath lured,
Or Fame with spirit-stirring trump hath call'd
To climb her summits, . . to your Household Gods
Return; for not in Pleasure's gay abodes,
Nor in the unquiet unsafe halls of Fame
Doth Happiness abide. O ye who grieve
Much for the miseries of your fellow-kind,
More for their vices; ye whose honest eyes
Scowl on Oppression,—ye whose honest hearts
Beat high when Freedom sounds her dread alarm;
O ye who quit the path of peaceful life
Crusading for mankind . . a spaniel race
That lick the hand that beats them, or tear all
Alike in frenzy; to your Household Gods
Return! for by their altars Virtue dwells,
And Happiness with her; for by their
Tranquillity, in no unsocial mood,
Sits silent, listening to the pattering shower;
For, so Suspicion sleep not at the gate
Of Wisdom, Falsehood shall not enter there.

As on the height of some huge eminence,
Reach'd with long labour, the wayfaring man
Pauses awhile, and gazing o'er the plain
With many a sore step travell'd, turns him then
Serious to contemplate the onward road,
And calls to mind the comforts of his home,
And sighs that he has left them, and resolves
To stray no more: I on my way of life
Muse thus, Penates, and with firmest faith
Devote myself to you. I will not quit,
To mingle with the crowd, your calm abodes,
Where by the evening hearth Contentment sits
And hears the cricket chirp; where Love delights
To dwell, and on your altars lays his torch
That burns with no extinguishable flame.

Hear me, ye Powers benignant! there is one
Must be mine inmate, . . for I may not choose
But love him. He is one whom many wrongs
Have sicken'd of the world. There was a time
When he would weep to hear of wickedness,
And wonder at the tale; when for the oppressed
He felt a brother's pity, to the oppressor
A good man's honest anger. His quick eye
Betray'd each rising feeling; every thought
Leapt to his tongue. When first among mankind
He mingled, by himself he judged of

And loved and trusted them, to Wisdom deaf,
And took them to his bosom. Falsehood met
Her unsuspecting victim, fair of front,
And lovely as Apega's sculptured form,
Like that false image caught his warm embrace,
And pierced his open breast. The reptile race
Clung round his bosom, and with viper folds
Encircling, stung the fool who foster'd them.
His mother was Simplicity, his sire
Benevolence; in earlier days he bore
His father's name; the world who injured him
Call him Misanthropy. I may not choose
But love him, Household Gods! for we grew up [bred,
Together, and in the same school were
And our poor fortunes the same course have held,
Up to this hour.
Penates! some there are
Who say, that not in the inmost heaven ye dwell,
Gazing with eye remote on all the ways
Of man, his Guardian Gods; wiselier they deem
A dearer interest to the human race
Links you, yourselves the Spirits of the Dead.
No mortal eye may pierce the invisible world,
No light of human reason penetrate
The depth where Truth lies hid. Yet to this faith
My heart with instant sympathy assents;
And I would judge all systems and all faiths
By that best touchstone, from whose test Deceit
Shrinks like the Arch-Fiend at Ithuriel's spear;
And Sophistry's gay glittering bubble bursts,
As at the spousals of the Nereid's son,
When that false Florimel, with her prototype
Set side by side, in her unreal charms,
Dissolved away.
Nor can the halls of Heaven
Give to the human soul such kindred joy,
As hovering o'er its earthly haunts it feels,
When with the breeze it dwells around the brow
Of one beloved on earth; or when at night
In dreams it comes, and brings with it the Days
And Joys that are no more. Or when, perchance
With power permitted to alleviate ill
And fit the sufferer for the coming woe,
Some strange presage the Spirit breathes, and fills [it
The breast with ominous fear, preparing
For sorrow, pours into the afflicted heart
The balm of resignation, and inspires
With heavenly hope. Even as a child delights
To visit day by day the favourite plant
His hand has sown, to mark its gradual growth,
And watch all-anxious for the promised flower;
Thus to the blest spirit in innocence
And pure affections like a little child,
Sweet will it be to hover o'er the friends
Beloved; then sweetest, if, as duty prompts,
With earthly care we in their breasts have sown
The seeds of Truth and Virtue, holy flowers
Whose odour reacheth Heaven.
When my sick Heart
(Sick with hope long delay'd, than which no care
Weighs on the spirit heavier,) from itself
Seeks the best comfort, often have I deem'd
That thou didst witness every inmost thought,
SEWARD! my dear! dear friend! For not in vain,
O early summon'd on thy heavenly course,
Was thy brief sojourn here; me didst thou leave
With strengthen'd step to follow the right path,

Till we shall meet again. Meantime I soothe
The deep regret of nature, with belief,
O EDMUND! that thine eye's celestial ken
Pervades me now, marking with no mean joy
The movements of the heart that loved thee well!

Such feelings Nature prompts, and hence your rites,
Domestic Gods! arose. When for his son
With ceaseless grief Syrophanes bewail'd,
Mourning his age left childless, and his wealth
Heapt for an alien, he with obstinate eye
Still on the imaged marble of the dead
Dwelt, pampering sorrow. Thither from his wrath,
A safe asylum, fled the offending slave,
And garlanded the statue, and implored
His young lost lord to save. Remembrance then
Soften'd the father, and he loved to see
The votive wreath renew'd, and the rich smoke
Curl from the costly censer slow and sweet.
From Egypt soon the sorrow-soothing rites
Divulging spread; before your idol forms
By every hearth the blinded Pagan knelt,
Pouring his prayers to these, and offering there
Vain sacrifice or impious, and sometimes
With human blood your sanctuary defiled:
Till the first Brutus, tyrant-conquering chief,
Arose; he first the impious rites put down,
He fitliest, who for Freedom lived and died,
The friend of humankind. Then did your feasts
Frequent recur and blameless; and when came
The solemn festival,[1] whose happiest rites
Emblem'd Equality, the holiest truth,
Crown'd with gay garlands were your statues seen,
To you the fragrant censer smoked, to you
The rich libation flowed: vain sacrifice!
For not the poppy wreath nor fruits nor wine
Ye ask, Penates! nor the altar cleansed
With many a mystic form; ye ask the heart
Made pure, and by domestic Peace and Love
Hallow'd to you.
Hearken your hymn of praise,
Penates! to your shrines I come for rest,
There only to be found. Often at eve,
As in my wanderings I have seen far off
Some lonely light that spake of comfort there,
It told my heart of many a joy of home,
When I was homeless. Often as I gazed
From some high eminence on goodly vales
And cots and villages embower'd below,
The thought would rise that all to me was strange
Amid the scene so fair, nor one small spot
Where my tired mind might rest, and call it *Home*.
There is a magic in that little word:
It is a mystic circle that surrounds
Comforts and virtues never known beyond
The hallowed limit. Often has my heart
Ached for that quiet haven! Haven'd now,
I think of those in this world's wilderness
Who wander on and find no home of rest
Till to the grave they go: them Poverty,
Hollow-eyed fiend, the child of Wealth and Power,
Bad offspring of worst parents, aye afflicts,
Cankering with her foul mildews the chill'd heart; . .
Them Want with scorpion scourge drives to the den
Of Guilt: . . them Slaughter for the price of death

[1] The Saturnalia.

Throws to her raven brood. Oh, not on them,
God of eternal Justice! not on them
Let fall thy thunder!
Household Deities!
Then only shall be Happiness on earth
When man shall feel your sacred power, and love
Your tranquil joys; then shall the city stand
A huge void sepulchre, and on the site
Wherefortresses and palaces have stood,
The olive grow, there shall the Tree of Peace
Strike its roots deep and flourish. This the state
Shall bless the race redeem'd of Man, when Wealth
And Power and all their hideous progeny
Shall sink annihilate, and all mankind
Live in the equal brotherhood of love.
Heart-calming hope, and sure! for hitherward
Tend all the tumults of the troubled world,
Its woes, its wisdom, and its wickedness
Alike; . . so He hath will'd, whose will is just.

Meantime, all hoping and expecting all
In patient faith, to you, Domestic Gods!
Studious of other lore than song, I come.
Yet shall my Heart remember the past years
With honest pride, trusting that not in vain
Lives the pure song of Liberty and Truth.

Bristol, 1796.

ENGLISH ECLOGUES

[The first three of the following Eclogues were published in *Poems*, vol. ii, 1799, Eclogue II under the title of 'The Funeral'. Eclogue IV was published in *The Edinburgh Annual Register*, 1808.]

The following Eclogues, I believe, bear no resemblance to any poems in our language. This species of composition has become popular in Germany, and I was induced to attempt it by what was told me of the German Idylls by my friend Mr. William Taylor of Norwich. So far, therefore, these pieces may be deemed imitations, though I am not acquainted with the German language at present, and have never seen any translations or specimens in this kind.

With bad Eclogues I am sufficiently acquainted, from Tityrus and Corydon down to our English Strephons and Thirsisses. No kind of poetry can boast of more illustrious names, or is more distinguished by the servile dulness of imitated nonsense. Pastoral writers, 'more silly than their sheep,' have, like their sheep, gone on in the same track one after another. Gay struck into a new path. His eclogues were the only ones which interested me when I was a boy, and did not know they were burlesque. The subject would furnish matter for an essay, but this is not the place for it.

1799.

I

THE OLD MANSION-HOUSE

STRANGER

Old friend! why you seem bent on parish duty,
Breaking the highway stones, . . and 'tis a task
Somewhat too hard methinks for age like yours!

OLD MAN

Why yes! for one with such a weight of years
Upon his back! . . I've lived here, man and boy,
In this same parish, well nigh the full age
Of man, being hard upon threescore and ten.

I can remember sixty years ago
The beautifying of this mansion here,
When my late Lady's father, the old Squire,
Came to the estate.

STRANGER

Why then you have outlasted
All his improvements, for you see they're making
Great alterations here.

OLD MAN

Ay . . great indeed!
And if my poor old Lady could rise up . .
God rest her soul! 'twould grieve her to behold
What wicked work is here.

STRANGER

They've set about it
In right good earnest. All the front is gone;
Here's to be turf, they tell me, and a road
Round to the door. There were some yew trees too
Stood in the court. . .

OLD MAN

Ay, Master! fine old trees!
Lord bless us! I have heard my father say
His grandfather could just remember back
When they were planted there. It was my task
To keep them trimm'd, and 'twas a pleasure to me;
All straight and smooth, and like a great green wall!
My poor old lady many a time would come
And tell me where to clip, for she had play'd
In childhood under them, and 'twas her pride
To keep them in their beauty. Plague, I say,
On their new-fangled whimsies! we shall have
A modern shrubbery here stuck full of firs
And your pert poplar trees; . . I could as soon
Have plough'd my father's grave as cut them down!

STRANGER

But 'twill be lighter and more cheerful now;
A fine smooth turf, and with a carriage road
That sweeps conveniently from gate to gate.
I like a shrubbery too, for it looks fresh;
And then there's some variety about it.
In spring the lilac and the snow-ball flower,
And the laburnum with its golden strings
Waving in the wind: And when the autumn comes
The bright red berries of the mountain-ash,
With pines enough in winter to look green,
And show that something lives. Sure this is better
Than a great hedge of yew, making it look ever
All the year round like winter, and for
Dropping its poisonous leaves from the under boughs
Wither'd and bare.

OLD MAN

Ay! so the new Squire thinks;
And pretty work he makes of it! What 'tis
To have a stranger come to an old house!

STRANGER

It seems you know him not?

OLD MAN

No, Sir, not I.
They tell me he's expected daily now;
But in my Lady's time he never came
But once, for they were very distant kin.
If he had play'd about here when a child
In that fore court, and eat the yew-berries,
And sate in the porch, threading the jessamine flowers
Which fell so thick, he had not had the heart
To mar all thus!

STRANGER

Come ! come ! all is not wrong ;
Those old dark windows. . .

OLD MAN

They're demolish'd too, . .
As if he could not see through casement glass !
The very red-breasts, that so regular
Came to my Lady for her morning crumbs,
Won't know the windows now !

STRANGER

Nay they were small,
And then so darken'd round with jessamine,
Harbouring the vermin ; . . yet I could have wish'd
That jessamine had been saved, which canopied
And bower'd and lined the porch.

OLD MAN

It did one good
To pass within ten yards when 'twas in blossom.
There was a sweet-briar too that grew beside ;
My Lady loved at evening to sit there
And knit ; and her old dog lay at her feet
And slept in the sun ; 'twas an old favourite dog, . .
She did not love him less that he was old
And feeble, and he always had a place
By the fire-side : and when he died at last
She made me dig a grave in the garden for him.
For she was good to all ! a woeful day
'Twas for the poor when to her grave she went !

STRANGER

They lost a friend then ?

OLD MAN

You're a stranger here,
Or you wouldn't ask that question. Were they sick ?
She had rare cordial waters, and for herbs
She could have taught the Doctors. Then at winter,
When weekly she distributed the bread
In the poor old porch, to see her and to hear
The blessings on her ! and I warrant them
They were a blessing to her when her wealth
Had been no comfort else. At Christmas, Sir !
It would have warm'd your heart if you had seen
Her Christmas kitchen, . . how the blazing fire
Made her fine pewter shine, and holly boughs
So cheerful red, . . and as for misseltoe, . .
The finest bush that grew in the country round
Was mark'd for Madam. Then her old ale went
So bountiful about ! a Christmas cask,
And 'twas a noble one ! . . God help me, Sir !
But I shall never see such days again.

STRANGER

Things may be better yet than you suppose,
And you should hope the best.

OLD MAN

It don't look well, . .
These alterations, Sir ! I'm an old man,
And love the good old fashions ; we don't find
Old bounty in new houses. They've destroy'd
All that my Lady loved ; her favourite walk
Grubb'd up, . . and they do say that the great row
Of elms behind the house, which meet a-top,
They must fall too. Well ! well ! I did not think
To live to see all this, and 'tis perhaps
A comfort I shan't live to see it long.

STRANGER

But sure all changes are not needs for the worse,
My friend ?

OLD MAN

May-hap they mayn't, Sir; . . for all that
I like what I've been used to. I remember
All this from a child up, and now to lose it,
'Tis losing an old friend. There's nothing left
As 'twas; . . I go abroad and only meet
With men whose fathers I remember boys;
The brook that used to run before my door,
That's gone to the great pond; the trees I learnt
To climb are down; and I see nothing now
That tells me of old times, . . except the stones
In the churchyard. You are young, Sir, and I hope
Have many years in store, . . but pray to God
You mayn't be left the last of all your friends.

STRANGER

Well! well! you've one friend more than you're aware of.
If the Squire's taste don't suit with yours, I warrant
That's all you'll quarrel with: walk in and taste
His beer, old friend! and see if your old Lady
E'er broach'd a better cask. You did not know me,
But we're acquainted now. 'Twould not be easy
To make you like the outside; but within,
That is not changed, my friend! you'll always find
The same old bounty and old welcome there.

Westbury, 1798.

II

HANNAH

Passing across a green and lonely lane
A funeral met our view. It was not here
A sight of every day, as in the streets
Of some great city, and we stopt and ask'd
Whom they were bearing to the grave. A girl,
They answer'd, of the village, who had pined
Through the long course of eighteen painful months
With such slow wasting, that the hour of death
Came welcome to her. We pursued our way
To the house of mirth, and with that idle talk
Which passes o'er the mind and is forgot,
We wore away the time. But it was eve
When homewardly I went, and in the air
Was that cool freshness, that discolouring shade
Which makes the eye turn inward: hearing then
Over the vale the heavy toll of death
Sound slow, it made me think upon the dead;
I question'd more, and learnt her mournful tale.

She bore unhusbanded a mother's pains,
And he who should have cherish'd her, far off
Sail'd on the seas. Left thus, a wretched one,
Scorn made a mock of her, and evil tongues
Were busy with her name. She had to bear
The sharper sorrow of neglect from him
Whom she had loved too dearly. Once he wrote,
But only once that drop of comfort came
To mingle with her cup of wretchedness;
And when his parents had some tidings from him,

There was no mention of poor Hannah there,
Or 'twas the cold inquiry, more unkind
Than silence. So she pined and pined away,
And for herself and baby toil'd and toil'd;
Nor did she, even on her death-bed, rest
From labour, knitting there with lifted arms,
Till she sunk with very weakness. Her old mother
Omitted no kind office, working for her,
Albeit her hardest labour barely earn'd
Enough to keep life struggling, and prolong
The pains of grief and sickness. Thus she lay
On the sick bed of poverty, worn out
With her long suffering and those painful thoughts
Which at her heart were rankling, and so weak,
That she could make no effort to express
Affection for her infant; and the child,
Whose lisping love perhaps had solaced her,
Shunn'd her as one indifferent. But she too
Had grown indifferent to all things of earth,
Finding her only comfort in the thought
Of that cold bed wherein the wretched rest.
There had she now, in that last home, been laid,
And all was over now, . . sickness and grief,
Her shame, her suffering, and her penitence, . .
Their work was done. The school-boys as they sport
In the churchyard, for awhile might turn away
From the fresh grave till grass should cover it;
Nature would do that office soon; and none
Who trod upon the senseless turf would think
Of what a world of woes lay buried there!

Burton, near Christ Church, 1797.

III

THE RUINED COTTAGE

Ay, Charles! I knew that this would fix thine eye; . .
This woodbine wreathing round the broken porch,
Its leaves just withering, yet one autumn flower
Still fresh and fragrant; and yon hollyhock
That through the creeping weeds and nettles tall
Peers taller, lifting, column-like, a stem
Bright with its roseate blossoms. I have seen
Many an old convent reverend in decay,
And many a time have trod the castle courts
And grass-green halls, yet never did they strike
Home to the heart such melancholy thoughts
As this poor cottage. Look! its little hatch
Fleeced with that grey and wintry moss; the roof
Part moulder'd in, the rest o'ergrown with weeds,
House-leek, and long thin grass, and greener moss;
So Nature steals on all the works of man,
Sure conqueror she, reclaiming to herself
His perishable piles.
I led thee here,
Charles, not without design; for this hath been
My favourite walk even since I was a boy;
And I remember, Charles, this ruin here,
The neatest comfortable dwelling-place!
That when I read in those dear books which first
Woke in my heart the love of poesy,
How with the villagers Erminia dwelt,
And Calidore for a fair shepherdess
Forsook his quest to learn the shepherd's lore,
My fancy drew from this the little hut
Where that poor princess wept her hopeless love,

Or where the gentle Calidore at eve
Led Pastorella home. There was not then
A weed where all these nettles overtop
The garden-wall; but sweet-briar, scenting sweet
The morning air; rosemary and marjoram,
All wholesome herbs; and then, that woodbine wreathed
So lavishly around the pillar'd porch
Its fragrant flowers, that when I pass'd this way,
After a truant absence hastening home,
I could not chuse but pass with slacken'd speed
By that delightful fragrance. Sadly changed
Is this poor cottage! and its dwellers, Charles! . .
Theirs is a simple melancholy tale, . .
There's scarce a village but can fellowit:
And yet, methinks, it will not weary thee,
And should not be untold.
A widow here
Dwelt with an orphan grandchild: just removed
Above the reach of pinching poverty,
She lived on some small pittance which sufficed,
In better times, the needful calls of life,
Not without comfort. I remember her
Sitting at even in that open doorway,
And spinning in the sun. Methinks I see her
Raising her eyes and dark-rimm'd spectacles
To see the passer-by, yet ceasing not
To twirl her lengthening thread; or in the garden,
On some dry summer evening, walking round
To view her flowers, and pointing as she lean'd
Upon the ivory handle of her stick,
To some carnation whose o'erheavy head
Needed support; while with the watering-pot
Joanna follow'd, and refresh'd and trimm'd [child,
The drooping plant; Joanna, her dear
As lovely and as happy then as youth
And innocence could make her.
Charles, it seems
As though I were a boy again, and all
The mediate years with their vicissitudes
A half-forgotten dream. I see the Maid
So comely in her Sunday dress! her hair,
Her bright brown hair, wreathed in contracting curls;
And then her cheek! it was a red and white
That made the delicate hues of art look loathsome.
The countrymen who on their way to church
Were leaning o'er the bridge, loitering to hear
The bell's last summons, and in idleness
Watching the stream below, would all look up
When she pass'd by. And her old Grandam, Charles, . .
When I have heard some erring infidel
Speak of our faith as of a gloomy creed,
Inspiring superstitious wretchedness,
Her figure has recurr'd; for she did love
The Sabbath-day; and many a time hath cross'd
These fields in rain and through the winter snows,
When I, a graceless boy, and cold of foot,
Wishing the weary service at its end,
Have wonder'd wherefore that good dame came there,
Who, if it pleased her, might have staid beside
A comfortable fire.
One only care
Hung on her aged spirit. For herself,
Her path was plain before her, and the close
Of her long journey near. But then her child
Soon to be left alone in this bad world, . .
That was a thought which many a winter night
Had kept her sleepless: and when prudent love
In something better than a servant's state
Had placed her well at last, it was a pang
Like parting life to part with her dear girl.

One summer, Charles, when at the holidays
Return'd from school, I visited again
My old accustom'd walks, and found in them
A joy almost like meeting an old friend,
I saw the cottage empty, and the weeds
Already crowding the neglected flowers.
Joanna, by a villain's wiles seduced,
Had play'd the wanton, and that blow had reach'd
Her grandam's heart. She did not suffer long;
Her age was feeble, and this mortal grief
Brought her grey hairs with sorrow to the grave.

I pass this ruin'd dwelling oftentimes,
And think of other days. It wakes in me
A transient sadness; but the feelings, Charles,
Which ever with these recollections rise,
I trust in God they will not pass away.

Westbury, 1799.

IV

THE ALDERMAN'S FUNERAL

STRANGER

Whom are they ushering from the world, with all
This pageantry and long parade of death?

TOWNSMAN

A long parade, indeed, Sir, and yet here
You see but half; round yonder bend it reaches
A furlong further, carriage behind carriage.

STRANGER

'Tis but a mournful sight, and yet the pomp
Tempts me to stand a gazer.

TOWNSMAN

Yonder schoolboy
Who plays the truant, says the proclamation
Of peace was nothing to the show; and even
The chairing of the members at election
Would not have been a finer sight than this;
Only that red and green are prettier colours
Than all this mourning. There, Sir, you behold
One of the red-gown'd worthies of the city,
The envy and the boast of our exchange; . .
Ay, what was worth, last week, a good half-million,
Screw'd down in yonder hearse!

STRANGER

Then he was born
Under a lucky planet, who to-day
Puts mourning on for his inheritance.

TOWNSMAN

When first I heard his death, that very wish
Leapt to my lips; but now the closing scene
Of the comedy hath waken'd wiser thoughts;
And I bless God, that, when I go to the grave,
There will not be the weight of wealth like his
To sink me down.

STRANGER

The camel and the needle, . .
Is that then in your mind?

TOWNSMAN

Even so. The text
Is Gospel-wisdom. I would ride the camel, . .
Yea leap him flying, through the needle's eye,
As easily as such a pamper'd soul
Could pass the narrow gate.

STRANGER

Your pardon, Sir,
But sure this lack of Christian charity
Looks not like Christian truth.

TOWNSMAN

Your pardon too, Sir,
If, with this text before me, I should feel
In the preaching mood! But for these barren fig-trees,
With all their flourish and their leafiness,
We have been told their destiny and use,
When the axe is laid unto the root, and they
Cumber the earth no longer.

STRANGER

Was his wealth
Stored fraudfully, . . the spoil of orphans wrong'd,
And widows who had none to plead their right?

TOWNSMAN

All honest, open, honourable gains,
Fair legal interest, bonds and mortgages,
Ships to the East and West.

STRANGER

Why judge you then
So hardly of the dead?

TOWNSMAN

For what he left
Undone; . . for sins, not one of which is written
In the Ten Commandments. He, I warrant him,
Believed no other Gods than those of the Creed;
Bow'd to no idols, . . but his money-bags;
Swore no false oaths, except at the custom-house;
Kept the Sabbath idle; built a monument
To honour his dead father; did no murder;
Never sustain'd an action for crim-con;
Never pick'd pockets; never bore false-witness;
And never, with that all-commanding wealth,
Coveted his neighbour's house, nor ox, nor ass!

STRANGER

You knew him then it seems?

TOWNSMAN

As all men know
The virtues of your hundred-thousanders;
They never hide their lights beneath a bushel.

STRANGER

Nay, nay, uncharitable Sir! for often
Doth bounty like a streamlet flow unseen,
Freshening and giving life along its course.

TOWNSMAN

We track the streamlet by the brighter green
And livelier growth it gives; . . but as for this . .
This was a pool that stagnated and stunk;
The rains of heaven engendered nothing in it
But slime and foul corruption.

STRANGER

Yet even these
Are reservoirs whence public charity
Still keeps her channels full.

TOWNSMAN

Now, Sir, you touch
Upon the point. This man of half a million
Had all these public virtues which you praise:
But the poor man rung never at his door,
And the old beggar, at the public gate,
Who, all the summer long, stands hat in hand,
He knew how vain it was to lift an eye
To that hard face. Yet he was always found
Among your ten and twenty pound subscribers,
Your benefactors in the newspapers.
His alms were money put to interest
In the other world, . . donations to keep open

A running charity account with heaven, . .
Retaining fees against the Last Assizes,
When, for the trusted talents, strict account
Shall be required from all, and the old Arch-Lawyer
Plead his own cause as plaintiff.

STRANGER

I must needs
Believe you, Sir: . . these are your witnesses,
These mourners here, who from their carriages
Gape at the gaping crowd. A good March wind
Were to be pray'd for now, to lend their eyes
Some decent rheum; the very hireling mute
Bears not a face more blank of all emotion
Than the old servant of the family!
How can this man have lived, that thus his death
Costs not the soiling one white handkerchief!

TOWNSMAN

Who should lament for him, Sir, in whose heart
Love had no place, nor natural charity?
The parlour spaniel, when she heard his step,
Rose slowly from the hearth, and stole aside
With creeping pace; she never raised her eyes
To woo kind words from him, nor laid her head
Upraised upon his knee, with fondling whine.
How could it be but thus? Arithmetic
Was the sole science he was ever taught;
The multiplication-table was his Creed,
His Pater-noster, and his Decalogue.
When yet he was a boy, and should have breathed
The open air and sunshine of the fields,
To give his blood its natural spring and play,
He in a close and dusky counting-house
Smoke-dried and sear'd and shrivell'd up his heart.
So from the way in which he was train'd up
His feet departed not; he toil'd and moil'd,
Poor muck-worm! through his three-score years and ten;
And when the earth shall now be shovell'd on him,
If that which served him for a soul were still
Within its husk, 'twould still be dirt to dirt.

STRANGER

Yet your next newspapers will blazon him
For industry and honourable wealth
A bright example.

TOWNSMAN

Even half a million
Gets him no other praise. But come this way
Some twelve months hence, and you will find his virtues
Trimly set forth in lapidary lines,
Faith with her torch beside, and little Cupids
Dropping upon his urn their marble tears.

Bristol 1803.

THE DEVIL'S WALK

ADVERTISEMENT

AFTER the Devil's Thoughts had been published by Mr. Coleridge in the collection of his Poetical Works, and the statement with which he accompanied it, it might have been supposed that the joint authorship of that Siamese production had been sufficiently authenticated, and that no supposititious claim to it would again be advanced. The following extract, however, appeared in the *John Bull* of Feb. 14, 1830:—

'In the *Morning Post* of Tuesday, we find the following letter:—

'"*To the Editor of the Morning Post.*

'"SIR,—Permit me to correct a statement which appeared in a recent number of the *John Bull*, wherein it is made to appear that Dr. Southey is the author of the Poem entitled *The Devil's Walk*. I have the means of settling this question; since I possess the identical MS. copy of verses, as they were written by my uncle, the late Professor Porson, during an evening party at Dr. Beloe's.

'"I am Sir, your very obedient Servant,

'"R. C. PORSON.

'"*Bayswater Terrace*, Feb. 6, 1830."

'We are quite sure that Mr. Porson, the writer of the above letter, is convinced of the truth of the statement it contains; but although *The Devil's Walk* is perhaps not a work of which either Mr. Southey or Mr. Porson need be very proud, we feel it due to ourselves to re-state the fact of its being from the pen of Mr. Southey. If we are wrong, Mr. Porson may apply to Mr. Southey; for although Mr. Porson's eminent uncle is dead, the Poet Laureate is alive and merry.

'The Lines—Poem they can scarcely be called—were written by Mr. Southey, one morning before breakfast, the idea having struck him while he was shaving; they were subsequently shown to Mr. Coleridge, who, we believe, pointed some of the stanzas, and perhaps added one or two.

'We beg to assure Mr. R. C. Porson that we recur to this matter out of no disrespect either to the memory of his uncle, which is not likely to be affected one way or another by the circumstance; or to his own veracity, being, as we said, quite assured that he believes the statement he makes: our only object is to set ourselves right.'

. . . . . .

'Our readers, perhaps, may smile at the following, which appears in yesterday's *Court Journal*:—

'"We have received a letter, signed 'W. Marshall,' and dated 'York'; claiming for its writer the long-contested authorship of those celebrated verses, which are known by the title of *The Devil's Walk on Earth*, and to which attention has lately been directed anew, by Lord Byron's imitation of them. There have been so many mystifications connected with the authorship of these clever verses, that, for any thing we know to the contrary, this letter may be only one more."'

. . . . . .

A week afterwards there was the following notice:—'We cannot waste any more time about *The Devil's Walk*. We happen to *know* that it is Mr. Southey's; but, as he is alive, we refer any body, who is not yet satisfied, to the eminent person himself—we do not mean the Devil—but the Doctor.'

The same newspaper contained the ensuing advertisement:—'On Tuesday next, uniform with Robert Cruikshank's Monsieur Tonson, price one shilling: The Devil's Walk, a Poem, by Professor Porson. With additions and variations by Southey and Coleridge; illustrated by seven engravings from R. Cruikshank. London, Marsh and Miller, 137 Oxford Street; and Constable and Co., Edinburgh.'

Professor Porson never had any part in these verses as a *writer*, and it is for the first time that he now appears in them as the *subject* of two or three stanzas written some few years ago, when the fabricated story of his having composed them during an evening party at Dr. Vincent's (for that was the original *habitat* of this falsehood) was revived. A friend of one of the authors, more jealous for him than he has ever been for himself, urged him then to put the matter out of doubt (for it was before Mr. Coleridge had done so); and as much to please that friend, as to amuse himself and his domestic circle, in a sportive mood, the part which relates the rise and progress of the Poem was thrown off, and that also touching the aforesaid Professor. The old vein having thus been opened, some other passages were added; and so it grew to its present length.

THE DEVIL'S WALK

[First printed in *The Morning Post*, September 6, 1799. See Notes.]

1

From his brimstone bed at break of day
A walking the Devil is gone,
To look at his little snug farm of the World,
And see how his stock went on.

2

Over the hill and over the dale,
And he went over the plain;
And backward and forward he swish'd his tail,
As a gentleman swishes a cane.

3

How then was the Devil drest?
Oh, he was in his Sunday's best,
His coat was red and his breeches were blue,
And there was a hole where his tail came through.

4

A lady drove by in her pride,
In whose face an expression he spied
For which he could have kiss'd her;
Such a flourishing, fine, clever creature was she,
With an eye as wicked as wicked can be,
I should take her for my Aunt, thought he,
If my dam had had a sister.

5

He met a lord of high degree,
No matter what was his name;
Whose face with his own when he came to compare
The expression, the look, and the air,
And the character too, as it seem'd to a hair,—
Such a twin-likeness there was in the pair
That it made the Devil start and stare,
For he thought there was surely a looking-glass there,
But he could not see the frame.

6

He saw a Lawyer killing a viper
On a dunghill beside his stable;
Ho! quoth he, thou put'st me in mind
Of the story of Cain and Abel.

7

An Apothecary on a white horse
Rode by on his vocation;
And the Devil thought of his old friend
Death in the Revelation.

8

He pass'd a cottage with a double coach-house,
A cottage of gentility!
And he own'd with a grin
That his favourite sin
Is pride that apes humility.

9

He saw a pig rapidly
Down a river float;
The pig swam well, but every stroke
Was cutting his own throat;

10

And Satan gave thereat his tail
A twirl of admiration;
For he thought of his daughter War
And her suckling babe Taxation.

11

Well enough, in sooth, he liked that truth,
And nothing the worse for the jest;
But this was only a first thought
And in this he did not rest:
Another came presently into his head,
And here it proved, as has often been said,
That second thoughts are best.

12

For as Piggy plied with wind and tide,
His way with such celerity,
And at every stroke the water dyed
With his own red blood, the Devil cried,
Behold a swinish nation's pride
In cotton-spun prosperity.

13

He walk'd into London leisurely,
The streets were dirty and dim:
But there he saw Brothers the Prophet,
And Brothers the Prophet saw him.[1]

14

He entered a thriving bookseller's shop;
Quoth he, We are both of one college,
For I myself sate like a Cormorant once
Upon the Tree of Knowledge.

15

As he passed through Cold-Bath Fields he look'd
At a solitary cell;
And he was well-pleased, for it gave him a hint
For improving the prisons of Hell.

16

He saw a turnkey tie a thief's hands
With a cordial tug and jerk;
Nimbly, quoth he, a man's fingers move
When his heart is in his work.

17

He saw the same turnkey unfettering a man
With little expedition;
And he chuckled to think of his dear slave trade,
And the long debates and delays that were made
Concerning its abolition.

18

He met one of his favourite daughters
By an Evangelical Meeting;
And forgetting himself for joy at her sight,
He would have accosted her outright,
And given her a fatherly greeting.

19

But she tipt him a wink, drew back, and cried,
Avaunt! my name's Religion!
And then she turn'd to the preacher
And leer'd like a love-sick pigeon.

20

A fine man and a famous Professor was he,
As the great Alexander now may be,
Whose fame not yet o'erpast is;
Or that new Scotch performer
Who is fiercer and warmer,
The great Sir Arch-Bombastes.

21

With throbs and throes, and ahs and ohs,
Far famed his flock for frightening;
And thundering with his voice, the while
His eyes zigzag like lightning.

22

This Scotch phenomenon, I trow,
Beats Alexander hollow;
Even when most tame
He breathes more flame
Than ten Fire-Kings could swallow.

[1] 'After this I was in a vision, having the angel of God near me, and saw Satan walking leisurely into London.'—*Brothers' Prophecies*, part i, p. 41.

23

Another daughter he presently met:
With music of fife and drum,
And a consecrated flag,
And shout of tag and rag,
And march of rank and file,
Which had fill'd the crowded aisle
Of the venerable pile,
From church he saw her come.

24

He call'd her aside, and began to chide,
For what dost thou here? said he;
My city of Rome is thy proper home,
And there's work enough there for thee.

25

Thou hast confessions to listen,
And bells to christen,
And altars and dolls to dress;
And fools to coax,
And sinners to hoax,
And beads and bones to bless;
And great pardons to sell
For those who pay well,
And small ones for those who pay less.

26

Nay, Father, I boast, that this is my post,
She answered; and thou wilt allow,
That the great Harlot,
Who is clothed in scarlet,
Can very well spare me now.

27

Upon her business I am come here,
That we may extend her powers;
Whatever lets down this church that we hate,
Is something in favour of ours.

28

You will not think, great Cosmocrat!
That I spend my time in fooling;
Many irons, my Sire, have we in the fire,
And I must leave none of them cooling;
For you must know state-councils here
Are held which I bear rule in.
When my liberal notions
Produce mischievous motions,
There's many a man of good intent,
In either house of Parliament,
Whom I shall find a tool in;
And I have hopeful pupils too
Who all this while are schooling.

29

Fine progress they make in our liberal opinions,
My Utilitarians,
My all sorts of —inians
And all sorts of —arians;
My all sorts of —ists,
And my Prigs and my Whigs
Who have all sorts of twists
Train'd in the very way, I know,
Father, you would have them go;
High and low,
Wise and foolish, great and small,
March-of-Intellect-Boys all.

30

Well pleased wilt thou be at no very far day
When the caldron of mischief boils,
And I bring them forth in battle array
And bid them suspend their broils,
That they may unite and fall on the prey,
For which we are spreading our toils.
How the nice boys all will give mouth at the call,
Hark away! hark away to the spoils!
My Macs and my Quacks and my lawless-Jacks,
My Sheils and O'Connells, my pious Mac-Donnells,
My joke-smith Sydney, and all of his kidney,
My Humes and my Broughams,
My merry old Jerry,
My Lord Kings, and my Doctor Doyles!

31

At this good news, so great
The Devil's pleasure grew,
That with a joyful swish he rent
The hole where his tail came through.

32

His countenance fell for a moment
When he felt the stitches go;
Ah! thought he, there's a job now
That I've made for my tailor below.

33

Great news! bloody news! cried a newsman;
The Devil said, Stop, let me see!
Great news? bloody news? thought the Devil,
The bloodier the better for me.

34

So he bought the newspaper, and no news
At all for his money he had.
Lying varlet, thought he, thus to take in old Nick!
But it's some satisfaction, my lad,
To know thou art paid beforehand for the trick,
For the sixpence I gave thee is bad.

35

And then it came into his head
By oracular inspiration,
That what he had seen and what he had said,
In the course of this visitation,
Would be published in the Morning Post
For all this reading nation.

36

Therewith in second-sight he saw
The place and the manner and time,
In which this mortal story
Would be put in immortal rhyme.

37

That it would happen when two poets
Should on a time be met,
In the town of Nether Stowey,
In the shire of Somerset:

38

There while the one was shaving
Would he the song begin;
And the other when he heard it at breakfast,
In ready accord join in.

39

So each would help the other
Two heads being better than one;
And the phrase and conceit
Would in unison meet,
And so with glee the verse flow free,
In ding-dong chime of sing-song rhyme,
Till the whole were merrily done.

40

And because it was set to the razor,
Not to the lute or harp,
Therefore it was that the fancy
Should be bright, and the wit be sharp.

41

But then, said Satan to himself,
As for that said beginner,
Against my infernal Majesty
There is no greater sinner.

42

He hath put me in ugly ballads
With libellous pictures for sale;
He hath scoff'd at my hoofs and my horns,
And has made very free with my tail.

43

But this Mister Poet shall find
I am not a safe subject for whim;
For I'll set up a School of my own,
And my Poets shall set upon him.

44

He went to a coffee-house to dine,
And there he had soy in his dish;
Having ordered some soles for his dinner,
Because he was fond of flat fish.

45

They are much to my palate, thought he,
And now guess the reason who can,
Why no bait should be better than place,
When I fish for a Parliament-man.

46

But the soles in the bill were ten shillings;
Tell your master, quoth he, what I say;
If he charges at this rate for all things,
He must be in a pretty good way.

47

But mark ye, said he to the waiter,
I'm a dealer myself in this line,
And his business, between you and me,
Nothing like so extensive as mine.

48

Now soles are exceedingly cheap;
Which he will not attempt to deny,
When I see him at my fish-market,
I warrant him, by and by.

49

As he went along the Strand
Between three in the morning and four
He observed a queer-looking person
Who stagger'd from Perry's door.

50

And he thought that all the world over
In vain for a man you might seek,
Who could drink more like a Trojan
Or talk more like a Greek.

51

The Devil then he prophesied
It would one day be matter of talk,
That with wine when smitten,
And with wit moreover being happily bitten,
This erudite bibber was he who had written
The story of this walk.

52

A pretty mistake, quoth the Devil;
A pretty mistake I opine!
I have put many ill thoughts in his mouth,
He will never put good ones in mine.

53

And whoever shall say that to Porson
These best of all verses belong,
He is an untruth-telling whoreson,
And so shall be call'd in the song.

54

And if seeking an illicit connection with fame,
Any one else should put in a claim,
In this comical competition;
That excellent poem will prove
A man-trap for such foolish ambition,
Where the silly rogue shall be caught by the leg,
And exposed in a second edition.

55

Now the morning air was cold for him
Who was used to a warm abode;
And yet he did not immediately wish
To set out on his homeward road.

56

For he had some morning calls to make
Before he went back to Hell;
So, thought he, I'll step into a gaming-house,
And that will do as well;
But just before he could get to the door
A wonderful chance befell.

57

For all on a sudden, in a dark place,
He came upon General ———'s burning face;
And it struck him with such consternation,
That home in a hurry his way did he take,
Because he thought by a slight mistake
'Twas the general conflagration.

INSCRIPTIONS

'The three utilities of Poetry: the praise of Virtue and Goodness, the memory of things remarkable, and to invigorate the Affections.'—*Welsh Triad.*

[As five of the inscriptions have been inserted among the Selected Minor Poems, it has been necessary in some instances to alter the numbering of those here printed. Where this has been done, a number in brackets ( ) at the head of an inscription denotes its number in the edition of 1837–1838.

Inscriptions I–VI inclusive were published in *Poems*, 1797. I, II, and III have been almost rewritten.]

I

FOR A COLUMN AT NEWBURY

CALLEST thou thyself a Patriot? . . On this field
Did Falkland fall, the blameless and the brave,
Beneath the banners of that Charles whom thou
Abhorrest for a Tyrant. Dost thou boast
Of loyalty? The field is not far off
Where in rebellious arms against his King
Hambden was kill'd, that Hambden at whose name
The heart of many an honest Englishman
Beats with congenial pride. Both uncorrupt,
Friends to their common country both, they fought,
They died in adverse armies. Traveller!
If with thy neighbour thou shouldst not accord,
Remember these, our famous countrymen,
And quell all angry and injurious thoughts.

Bristol, 1796.

II

FOR A CAVERN THAT OVERLOOKS THE RIVER AVON

ENTER this cavern, Stranger! Here awhile
Respiring from the long and steep ascent,
Thou may'st be glad of rest, and haply too
Of shade, if from the summer's westering sun
Shelter'd beneath this beetling vault of rock.
Round the rude portal clasping its rough arms
The antique ivy spreads a canopy,
From whose grey blossoms the wild bees collect
In autumn their last store. The Muses love
This spot; believe a Poet who hath felt
Their visitation here. The tide below
Rising or refluent scarcely sends its sound
Of waters up; and from the heights beyond
Where the high-hanging forest waves and sways,
Varying before the wind its verdant hues,
The voice is music here. Here thou may'st feel
How good, how lovely, Nature! And when hence
Returning to the city's crowded streets,
Thy sickening eye at every step revolts
From scenes of vice and wretchedness, reflect
That Man creates the evil he endures.

Bristol, 1796.

III

FOR A TABLET AT SILBURY-HILL

THIS mound in some remote and dateless day
Rear'd o'er a Chieftain of the Age of Hills,
May here detain thee, Traveller! from thy road
Not idly lingering. In his narrow house
Some warrior sleeps below, whose gallant deeds
Haply at many a solemn festival
The Scald hath sung; but perish'd is the song
Of praise, as o'er these bleak and barren downs
The wind that passes and is heard no more.
Go, Traveller, and remember when the pomp
Of earthly Glory fades, that one good deed,
Unseen, unheard, unnoted by mankind,
Lives in the eternal register of Heaven.

Bristol, 1796.

IV

FOR A MONUMENT IN THE NEW FOREST

THIS is the place where William's kingly power
Did from their poor and peaceful homes expel,
Unfriended, desolate, and shelterless,
The habitants of all the fertile track
Far as these wilds extend. He levell'd down
Their little cottages, he bade their fields
Lie waste, and forested the land, that so
More royally might he pursue his sports.
If that thine heart be human, Passenger!
Sure it will swell within thee, and thy lips
Will mutter curses on him. Think thou then
What cities flame, what hosts unsepulchred
Pollute the passing wind, when raging Power
Drives on his blood-hounds to the chase of Man;
And as thy thoughts anticipate that day
When God shall judge aright, in charity
Pray for the wicked rulers of mankind.

Bristol, 1796.

V

FOR A TABLET ON THE BANKS OF A STREAM

STRANGER! awhile upon this mossy bank
Recline thee. If the Sun rides high, the breeze,
That loves to ripple o'er the rivulet,
Will play around thy brow, and the cool sound
Of running waters soothe thee. Mark how clear
They sparkle o'er the shallows, and behold
Where o'er their surface wheels with restless speed
Yon glossy insect, on the sand below
How its swift shadow flits. In solitude
The rivulet is pure, and trees and herbs
Bend o'er its salutary course refresh'd,
But passing on amid the haunts of men,
It finds pollution there, and rolls from thence
A tainted stream. Seek'st thou for HAPPINESS?
Go, Stranger, sojourn in the woodland cot
Of INNOCENCE, and thou shalt find her there.

Bristol, 1796.

VI

FOR THE CENOTAPH AT ERMENONVILLE

STRANGER! the MAN of NATURE lies not here:
Enshrin'd far distant by the Scoffer's[1] side
His relics rest, there by the giddy throng
With blind idolatry alike revered.
Wiselier directed have thy pilgrim feet
Explored the scenes of Ermenonville.
ROUSSEAU
Loved these calm haunts of Solitude and Peace;
Here he has heard the murmurs of the lake,
And the soft rustling of the poplar grove,
When o'er its bending boughs the passing wind
Swept a grey shade. Here, if thy breast be full,
If in thine eye the tear devout should gush,
His SPIRIT shall behold thee, to thine home
From hence returning, purified of heart.

Bristol, 1796.

VII

FOR A MONUMENT AT OXFORD

[First published in *The Oracle*, afterwards in *The Annual Anthology*, 1799, and in *Metrical Tales*, 1805.]

HERE Latimer and Ridley in the flames
Bore witness to the truth. If thou hast walk'd
Uprightly through the world, just thoughts of joy
May fill thy breast in contemplating here
Congenial virtue. But if thou hast swerved
From the straight path of even rectitude,
Fearful in trying seasons to assert
The better cause, or to forsake the worse
Reluctant, when perchance therein enthrall'd
Slave to false shame, oh! thankfully receive
The sharp compunctious motions that this spot
May wake within thee, and be wise in time,
And let the future for the past atone.

Bath, 1797.

[1] Voltaire.

VIII

FOR A MONUMENT IN THE VALE OF EWIAS

[First published in *The Morning Post*, December 21, 1798; afterwards in *The Annual Anthology*, 1799, and in *Metrical Tales*, 1805.]

HERE was it, Stranger, that the patron Saint
Of Cambria pass'd his age of penitence,
A solitary man; and here he made
His hermitage, the roots his food, his drink
Of Hodney's mountain stream. Perchance thy youth
Has read with eager wonder how the Knight
Of Wales in Ormandine's enchanted bower
Slept the long sleep: and if that in thy veins
Flow the pure blood of Britain, sure that blood
Hath flow'd with quicker impulse at the tale
Of David's deeds, when through the press of war
His gallant comrades follow'd his green crest
To victory. Stranger! Hatterill's mountain heights
And this fair vale of Ewias, and the stream
Of Hodney, to thine after-thoughts will rise
More grateful, thus associate with the name
Of David and the deeds of other days.

Bath, 1798.

IX

EPITAPH ON ALGERNON SIDNEY

[First published in *The Morning Post*, December 25, 1798; afterwards in *Metrical Tales*, 1805.]

HERE Sidney lies, he whom perverted law,
The pliant jury and the bloody judge,
Doom'd to a traitor's death. A tyrant King
Required, an abject country saw and shared
The crime. The noble cause of Liberty
He loved in life, and to that noble cause
In death bore witness. But his country rose
Like Samson from her sleep, and broke her chains,
And proudly with her worthies she enroll'd
Her murder'd Sidney's name. The voice of man
Gives honour or destroys; but earthly power
Gives not, nor takes away, the self-applause
Which on the scaffold suffering virtue feels,
Nor that which God appointed its reward.

Westbury, 1798.

X

EPITAPH ON KING JOHN

[First published in *The Morning Post*, May 28, 1798; afterwards in *The Annual Anthology*, 1799, and in *Metrical Tales*, 1805.]

JOHN rests below. A man more infamous
Never hath held the sceptre of these realms,
And bruised beneath the iron rod of Power
The oppressed men of England. Englishman!
Curse not his memory. Murderer as he was,
Coward and slave, yet he it was who sign'd
That Charter which should make thee morn and night
Be thankful for thy birth-place: . . . Englishman!
That holy Charter, which, shouldst thou permit
Force to destroy, or Fraud to undermine,
Thy children's groans will persecute thy soul,
For they must bear the burthen of thy crime.

Westbury, 1798.

XI (XII)

FOR A MONUMENT AT TORDESILLAS

[Published in *Letters from Spain and Portugal*, 1797.]

SPANIARD! if thou art one who bows the knee
Before a despot's footstool, hie thee hence!
This ground is holy: here Padilla died,
Martyr of Freedom. But if thou dost love
Her cause, stand then as at an altar here,
And thank the Almighty that thine honest heart,
Full of a brother's feelings for mankind,
Revolts against oppression. Not unheard
Nor unavailing shall the grateful prayer
Ascend; for honest impulses will rise,
Such as may elevate and strengthen thee
For virtuous action. Relics silver-shrined,
And chaunted mass, would wake within the soul
Thoughts valueless and cold compared with these.

Bristol, 1796.

XII (XIII)

FOR A COLUMN AT TRUXILLO

[Published in *Letters from Spain and Portugal*, 1797.]

PIZARRO here was born; a greater name
The list of Glory boasts not. Toil and Pain,
Famine and hostile Elements, and Hosts
Embattled, fail'd to check him in his course,
Not to be wearied, not to be deterr'd,
Not to be overcome. A mighty realm
He over-ran, and with relentless arm
Slew or enslaved its unoffending sons,
And wealth, and power, and fame, were his rewards.
There is another world, beyond the Grave,
According to their deeds where men are judged.
O Reader! if thy daily bread be earn'd
By daily labour, . . yea, however low,
However painful be thy lot assign'd,
Thank thou, with deepest gratitude, the God
Who made thee, that thou art not such as he.

Bristol, 1796.

XIII (XIV)

FOR THE CELL OF HONORIUS, AT THE CORK CONVENT, NEAR CINTRA

[First published in *The Morning Post*, November 5, 1798.]

HERE cavern'd like a beast Honorius pass'd
In self-affliction, solitude, and prayer,
Long years of penance. He had rooted out
All human feelings from his heart, and fled
With fear and loathing from all human joys.
Not thus in making known his will divine
Hath Christ enjoin'd. To aid the fatherless,
Comfort the sick, and be the poor man's friend,
And in the wounded heart pour gospel-balm;
These are the injunctions of his holy law,
Which whoso keeps shall have a joy on earth,
Calm, constant, still increasing, preluding
The eternal bliss of Heaven. Yet mock not thou,
Stranger, the Anchorite's mistaken zeal!
He painfully his painful duties kept,
Sincere though erring: Stranger, do thou keep
Thy better and thine easier rule as well.

Bristol, 1798.

XIV (XV)

FOR A MONUMENT AT TAUNTON

[First published in *The Morning Post*, July 6, 1799; afterwards in *The Annual Anthology*, 1799, and in *Metrical Tales*, 1805.]

THEY suffer'd here whom Jefferies doom'd to death
In mockery of all justice, when the Judge
Unjust, subservient to a cruel King,
Perform'd his work of blood. They suffer'd here
The victims of that Judge, and of that King;
In mockery of all justice here they bled,
Unheard. But not unpitied, nor of God
Unseen, the innocent suffered; not unheard
The innocent blood cried vengeance; for at length,
The indignant Nation in its power arose,
Resistless. Then that wicked Judge took flight,
Disguised in vain: . . not always is the Lord

Slow to revenge! A miserable man
He fell beneath the people's rage, and still
The children curse his memory. From the throne
The obdurate bigot who commission'd him,
Inhuman James, was driven. He lived to drag
Long years of frustrate hope, he lived to load
More blood upon his soul. Let tell the Boyne,
Let Londonderry tell his guilt and shame;
And that immortal day when on thy shores,
La Hogue, the purple ocean dash'd the dead!

Westbury, 1798.

XV (XVI)

FOR A TABLET AT PENSHURST

[First published in *The Morning Post*, December 7, 1798; afterwards in *The Annual Anthology*, 1799, and in *Metrical Tales*, 1805.]

Are days of old familiar to thy mind,
O Reader? Hast thou let the midnight hour
Pass unperceived, whilst thou in fancy lived
With high-born beauties and enamour'd chiefs,
Sharing their hopes, and with a breathless joy
Whose expectation touch'd the verge of pain,
Following their dangerous fortunes? If such lore
Hath ever thrill'd thy bosom, thou wilt tread,
As with a pilgrim's reverential thoughts,
The groves of Penshurst. Sidney here was born,
Sidney, than whom no gentler, braver man
His own delightful genius ever feign'd,
Illustrating the vales of Arcady
With courteous courage and with loyal loves.
Upon his natal day an acorn here
Was planted: it grew up a stately oak,
And in the beauty of its strength it stood
And flourish'd, when his perishable part
Had moulder'd, dust to dust. That stately oak
Itself hath moulder'd now, but Sidney's fame
Endureth in his own immortal works.

Westbury, 1799.

XVI (XVII)

EPITAPH

This to a mother's sacred memory
Her son hath hallow'd. Absent many a year
Far over sea, his sweetest dreams were still
Of that dear voice which soothed his infancy;
And after many a fight against the Moor
And Malabar, or that fierce cavalry
Which he had seen covering the boundless plain,
Even to the utmost limits where the eye
Could pierce the far horizon, . . his first thought
In safety was of her, who when she heard
The tale of that day's danger, would retire
And pour her pious gratitude to Heaven
In prayers and tears of joy. The lingering hour
Of his return, long-look'd-for, came at length,
And full of hope he reach'd his native shore.
Vain hope that puts its trust in human life!
For ere he came, the number of her days
Was full. O Reader, what a world were this,
How unendurable its weight, if they
Whom Death hath sunder'd did not meet again!

Keswick, 1810.

XVII (XIX)

FOR A MONUMENT AT ROLISSA

TIME has been when Rolissa was a name
Ignoble, by the passing traveller heard
And then forthwith forgotten; now in war
It is renown'd. For when to her ally,
In bondage by perfidious France oppress'd
England sent succour, first within this realm
The fated theatre of their long strife
Confronted, here the hostile nations met.
Laborde took here his stand; upon yon point
Of Mount Saint Anna was his Eagle fix'd;
The veteran chief, disposing well all aid
Of height and glen, possess'd the mountain straits,
A post whose strength thus mann'd and profited
Seem'd to defy the enemy and make
The vantage of assailing numbers vain.
Here, too, before the sun should bend his course
Adown the slope of heaven, so had their plans
Been timed, he look'd for Loison's army, rich
With spoils from Evora and Beja sack'd.
That hope the British Knight areeding well,
With prompt attack prevented; and nor strength
Of ground, nor leader's skill nor discipline
Of soldiers practised in the ways of war,
Avail'd that day against the British arm.
Resisting long, but beaten from their stand,
The French fell back; they join'd their greater host
To suffer fresh defeat, and Portugal
First for Sir Arthur wreathed her laurels here.

XVIII (XX)

FOR A MONUMENT AT VIMEIRO

THIS is Vimeiro; yonder stream which flows
Westward through heathery highlands to the sea,
Is call'd Maceira, till of late a name,
Save to the dwellers of this peaceful vale,
Known only to the coasting mariner;
Now in the bloody page of war inscribed.
When to the aid of injured Portugal
Struggling against the intolerable yoke
Of treacherous France, England, her old ally,
Long tried and always faithful found, went forth,
The embattled hosts in equal strength array'd,
And equal discipline, encountered here.
Junot, the mock Abrantes, led the French,
And confident of skill so oft approved,
And vaunting many a victory, advanced
Against an untried foe. But when the ranks
Met in the shock of battle, man to man,
And bayonet to bayonet opposed,
The flower of France, cut down along their line,
Fell like ripe grass before the mower's scythe,
For the strong arm and rightful cause prevail'd.
That day deliver'd Lisbon from the yoke,
And babes were taught to bless Sir Arthur's name.

XIX (XXI)

AT CORUÑA

When from these shores the British army first
Boldly advanced into the heart of Spain,
The admiring people who beheld its march
Call'd it 'the Beautiful'. And surely well
Its proud array, its perfect discipline,
Its ample furniture of war complete,
Its powerful horse, its men of British mould,
All high in heart and hope, all of themselves
Assured, and in their leaders confident,
Deserved the title. Few short weeks elapsed
Ere hither that disastrous host return'd,
A fourth of all its gallant force consumed
In hasty and precipitate retreat,
Stores, treasure, and artillery, in the wreck
Left to the fierce pursuer, horse and man
Founder'd, and stiffening on the mountain snows.
But when the exulting enemy approach'd
Boasting that he would drive into the sea
The remnant of the wretched fugitives,
Here, ere they reach'd their ships, they turn'd at bay.
Then was the proof of British courage seen;
Against a foe far overnumbering them,
An insolent foe, rejoicing in pursuit,
Sure of the fruit of victory, whatsoe'er
Might be the fate of battle, here they stood,
And their safe embarkation, . . all they sought,
Won manfully. That mournful day avenged
Their sufferings, and redeem'd their country's name;
And thus Coruña, which in this retreat
Had seen the else indelible reproach
Of England, saw the stain effaced in blood.

XX (XXII)

EPITAPH

He who in this unconsecrated ground
Obtain'd a soldier's grave, hath left a name
Which will endure in history: the remains
Of Moore, the British General, rest below.
His early prowess Corsica beheld,
When, at Mozello, bleeding, through the breach
He passed victorious; the Columbian isles
Then saw him tried; upon the sandy downs
Of Holland was his riper worth approved;
And leaving on the Egyptian shores his blood,
He gathered there fresh palms. High in repute
A gallant army last he led to Spain,
In arduous times; for moving in his strength,
With all his mighty means of war complete,
The Tyrant Buonaparte bore down all
Before him; and the British Chief beheld,
Where'er he look'd, rout, treason, and dismay,
All sides with all embarrassments beset,
And danger pressing on. Hither he came
Before the far out-numbering hosts of France
Retreating to her ships, and close pursued;
Nor were there wanting men who counsell'd him
To offer terms, and from the enemy
Purchase a respite to embark in peace,
At price of such abasement, . . even to this,
Brave as they were, by hopelessness subdued.
That shameful counsel Moore, in happy hour
Remembering what was due to England's name,
Refused: he fought, he conquer'd, and he fell.

XXI (XXIII)

TO THE MEMORY OF PAUL BURRARD

MORTALLY WOUNDED IN THE BATTLE OF CORUÑA

[Published in *The Literary Souvenir* for 1826.]

Mysterious are the ways of Providence !—
Old men who have grown grey in camps, and wish'd,
And pray'd, and sought in battle to lay down
The burthen of their age, have seen the young
Fall round, themselves untouch'd; and balls beside
The graceless and the unblest head have pass'd,
Harmless as hail, to reach some precious life,
For which clasp'd hands, and supplicating eyes,
Duly at morn and eve were raised to Heaven;
And, in the depth and loneness of the soul
(Then boding all too truly), midnight prayers
Breathed from an anxious pillow wet with tears.
But blessed, even amid their grief, are they
Who, in the hour of visitation, bow
Beneath the unerring will, and look toward
Their Heavenly Father, merciful as just!
They, while they own his goodness, feel that whom
He chastens, them he loves. The cup he gives,
Shall they not drink it? Therefore doth the draught
Resent of comfort in its bitterness,
And carry healing with it. What but this
Could have sustain'd the mourners who were left,
With life-long yearnings, to remember him
Whose early death this monumental verse
Records? For never more auspicious hopes
Were nipt in flower, nor finer qualities
From goodliest fabric of mortality
Divorced, nor virtues worthier to adorn
The world transferr'd to heaven, than when, ere time
Had measured him the space of nineteen years,
Paul Burrard on Coruña's fatal field
Received his mortal hurt. Not unprepared
The heroic youth was found: for in the ways
Of piety had he been trained; and what
The dutiful child upon his mother's knees
Had learnt, the soldier faithfully observed.
In chamber or in tent, the Book of God
Was his beloved manual; and his life
Beseem'd the lessons which from thence he drew.
For, gallant as he was, and blithe of heart,
Expert of hand, and keen of eye, and prompt
In intellect, religion was the crown
Of all his noble properties. When Paul
Was by, the scoffer, self-abased, restrain'd
The license of his speech; and ribaldry
Before his virtuous presence sate rebuked.
And yet so frank and affable a form
His virtue wore, that wheresoe'er he moved
A sunshine of good-will and cheerfulness
Enliven'd all around. Oh! marvel not,
If, in the morning of his fair career,
Which promised all that honour could bestow
On high desert, the youth was summon'd hence!

His soul required no farther discipline,
Pure as it was, and capable of Heaven.
Upon the spot from whence he just had seen
His General borne away, the appointed ball
Reach'd him. But not on that Gallician ground
Was it his fate, like many a British heart,
To mingle with the soil: the sea received
His mortal relics, . . to a watery grave
Consign'd so near his native shore, so near
His father's house, that they who loved him best,
Unconscious of its import, heard the gun
Which fired his knell.—Alas! if it were known,
When, in the strife of nations, dreadful Death
Mows down with indiscriminating sweep
His thousands ten times told, . . if it were known
What ties are sever'd then, what ripening hopes
Blasted, what virtues in their bloom cut off;
How far the desolating scourge extends;
How wide the misery spreads; what hearts beneath
Their grief are broken, or survive to feel
Always the irremediable loss;
Oh! who of woman born could bear the thought?
Who but would join with fervent piety
The prayer that asketh in our time for peace?—
Nor in our time alone!—Enable us,
Father which art in heaven! but to receive
And keep thy word: thy kingdom then should come,
Thy will be done on earth; the victory
Accomplished over Sin as well as Death,
And the great scheme of Providence fulfill'd.

XXII (XXIV)

FOR THE BANKS OF THE DOURO

Crossing in unexampled enterprize
This great and perilous stream, the English host
Effected here their landing, on the day
When Soult from Porto with his troops was driven.
No sight so joyful ever had been seen
From Douro's banks, . . not when the mountains sent
Their generous produce down, or homeward fleets
Entered from distant seas their port desired;
Nor e'er were shouts of such glad mariners
So gladly heard, as then the cannon's peal,
And short sharp strokes of frequent musketry,
By the delivered habitants that hour.
For they who beaten then and routed fled
Before victorious England, in their day
Of triumph, had, like fiends let loose from hell,
Fill'd yon devoted city with all forms
Of horror, all unutterable crimes;
And vengeance now had reach'd the inhuman race
Accurst. Oh what a scene did Night behold
Within those rescued walls, when festal fires,
And torches, blazing through the bloody streets,
Stream'd their broad light where horse and man in death
Unheeded lay outstretch'd! Eyes which had wept
In bitterness so long, shed tears of joy,
And from the broken heart thanksgiving mix'd
With anguish rose to Heaven. Sir Arthur then
Might feel how precious in a righteous cause
Is victory, how divine the soldier's meed,
When grateful nations bless the avenging sword!

XXIII (XXV)
TALAVERA
FOR THE FIELD OF BATTLE

YON wide-extended town, whose roofs and towers
And poplar avenues are seen far off,
In goodly prospect over scatter'd woods
Of dusky ilex, boasts among its sons
Of Mariana's name, . . he who hath made
The splendid story of his country's wars
Through all the European kingdoms known.
Yet in his ample annals thou canst find
No braver battle chronicled, than here
Was waged, when Joseph of the stolen crown
Against the hosts of England and of Spain
His veteran armies brought. By veteran chiefs
Captain'd, a formidable force they came,
Full fifty thousand. Victor led them on,
A man grown grey in arms, nor e'er in aught
Dishonoured, till by this opprobrious cause.
He over rude Alverche's summer stream
Winning his way, made first upon the right
His hot attack, where Spain's raw levies, ranged
In double line, had taken their strong stand
In yonder broken ground, by olive groves
Cover'd and flank'd by Tagus. Soon from thence,
As one whose practised eye could apprehend
All vantages in war, his troops he drew;
And on this hill, the battle's vital point,
Bore with collected power, outnumbering
The British ranks twice told. Such fearful odds
Were balanced by Sir Arthur's master mind
And by the British heart. Twice during night
The fatal spot they storm'd, and twice fell back,
Before the bayonet driven. Again at morn
They made their fiery onset, and again
Repell'd, again at noon renew'd the strife.
Yet was their desperate perseverance vain,
Where skill by equal skill was countervail'd,
And numbers by superior courage foil'd;
And when the second night drew over them
Its sheltering cope, in darkness they retired,
At all points beaten. Long in the red page
Of war shall Talavera's famous name
Stand forth conspicuous. While that name endures,
Bear in thy soul, O Spain, the memory
Of all thou sufferedst from perfidious France,
Of all that England in thy cause achieved.

XXIV (XXVI)
FOR THE DESERTO DE BUSACO

READER, thou standest upon holy ground
Which Penitence hath chosen for itself,
And war disturbing the deep solitude
Hath left it doubly sacred. On these heights
The host of Portugal and England stood,
Arrayed against Massena, when the chief
Proud of Rodrigo and Almeida won,
Press'd forward, thinking the devoted realm
Full sure should fall a prey. He in his pride
Scorn'd the poor numbers of the English foe,
And thought the children of the land would fly
From his advance, like sheep before the wolf,
Scattering, and lost in terror. Ill he knew

The Lusitanian spirit! Ill he knew
The arm, the heart of England! Ill he knew
Her Wellington! He learnt to know them here.
That spirit and that arm, that heart, that mind,
Here on Busaco gloriously display'd,
When hence repulsed the beaten boaster wound
Below, his course circuitous, and left
His thousands for the beasts and ravenous fowl.
The Carmelite who in his cell recluse
Was wont to sit, and from a skull receive
Death's silent lesson, wheresoe'er he walk
Henceforth may find his teachers. He shall find
The Frenchmen's bones in glen and grove, on rock
And height, where'er the wolves and carrion birds
Have strewn them, wash'd in torrents, bare and bleach'd
By sun and rain and by the winds of heaven.

XXV (XXVII)
FOR THE LINES OF TORRES VEDRAS

Through all Iberia, from the Atlantic shores
To far Pyrene, Wellington hath left
His trophies; but no monument records
To after-time a more enduring praise,
Than this which marks his triumph here attain'd
By intellect, and patience to the end
Holding through good and ill its course assign'd,
The stamp and seal of greatness. Here the chief
Perceived in foresight Lisbon's sure defence,
A vantage ground for all reverse prepared,
Where Portugal and England might defy
All strength of hostile numbers. Not for this
Of hostile enterprise did he abate,
Or gallant purpose: witness the proud day
Which saw Soult's murderous host from Porto driven;
Bear witness Talavera, made by him
Famous for ever; and that later fight,
When from Busaco's solitude the birds,
Then first affrighted in their sanctuary,
Fled from the thunders and the fires of war.
But when Spain's feeble counsels, in delay
As erring, as in action premature,
Had left him in the field without support,
And Buonaparte, having trampled down
The strength and pride of Austria, this way turn'd
His single thought and undivided power,
Retreating hither the great General came;
And proud Massena, when the boastful chief
Of plundered Lisbon dreamt, here found himself
Stopt suddenly in his presumptuous course.
From Ericeyra on the western sea,
By Mafra's princely convent, and the heights
Of Montichique, and Bucellas famed
For generous vines, the formidable works
Extending, rested on the guarded shores
Of Tagus, that rich river who received
Into his ample and rejoicing port
The harvests and the wealth of distant lands,
Secure, insulting with the glad display
The robber's greedy sight. Five months the foe
Beheld these lines, made inexpugnable
By perfect skill, and patriot feelings here
With discipline conjoin'd, courageous hands,
True spirits, and one comprehensive mind
All overseeing and pervading all.
Five months, tormenting still his heart with hope,
He saw his projects frustrated; the power

Of the blaspheming tyrant whom he served
Fail in the proof; his thousands disappear,
In silent and inglorious war consumed;
Till hence retreating, madden'd with despite,
Here did the self-styled Son of Victory leave,
Never to be redeem'd, that vaunted name.

XXVI (XXVIII)

AT SANTAREM

Four months Massena had his quarters here,
When by those lines deterr'd where Wellington
Defied the power of France, but loth to leave
Rich Lisbon yet unsack'd, he kept his ground,
Till from impending famine, and the force
Array'd in front, and that consuming war
Which still the faithful nation, day and night,
And at all hours was waging on his rear,
He saw no safety, save in swift retreat.
Then of his purpose frustrated, this child
Of Hell, . . so fitlier than of Victory call'd,
Gave his own devilish nature scope, and let
His devilish army loose. The mournful rolls
That chronicle the guilt of humankind
Tell not of aught more hideous than the deeds
With which this monster and his kindred troops
Track'd their inhuman way; all cruelties,
All forms of horror, all deliberate crimes,
Which tongue abhors to utter, ear to hear.
Let this memorial bear Massena's name
For everlasting infamy inscribed.

XXVII (XXIX)

AT FUENTES D'ONORO

The fountains of Onoro which give name
To this poor hamlet, were distain'd with blood,
What time Massena, driven from Portugal
By national virtue in endurance proved,
And England's faithful aid, against the land
Not long delivered, desperately made
His last fierce effort here. That day, bestreak'd
With slaughter Coa and Agueda ran,
So deeply had the open veins of war
Purpled their mountain feeders. Strong in means,
With rest, and stores, and numbers reinforced,
Came the ferocious enemy, and ween'd
Beneath their formidable cavalry
To trample down resistance. But there fought
Against them here, with Britons side by side,
The children of regenerate Portugal,
And their own crimes, and all-beholding Heaven.
Beaten, and hopeless thenceforth of success
The inhuman Marshal, never to be named
By Lusitanian lips without a curse
Of clinging infamy, withdrew and left
These Fountains famous for his overthrow.

XXVIII (XXXI)

FOR A MONUMENT AT ALBUHERA

Seven thousand men lay bleeding on these heights,
When Beresford in strenuous conflict strove
Against a foe whom all the accidents
Of battle favoured, and who knew full well
To seize all offers that occasion gave.
Wounded or dead, seven thousand here were stretch'd,

And on the plain around a myriad more,
Spaniard and Briton and true Portugueze,
Alike approved that day; and in the cause
Of France, with her flagitious sons compell'd,
Pole and Italian, German, Hollander,
Men of all climes and countries, hither brought,
Doing and suffering, for the work of war.
This point by her superior cavalry
France from the Spaniard won, the elements
Aiding her powerful efforts; here awhile
She seem'd to rule the conflict; and from hence
The British and the Lusitanian arm
Dislodged with irresistible assault
The enemy, even when he deem'd the day
Was written for his own. But not for Soult,
But not for France was that day in the rolls
Of war to be inscribed by Victory's hand,
Not for the inhuman chief, and cause unjust;
She wrote for aftertimes in blood the names
Of Spain and England, Blake and Beresford.

XXIX (XXXII)

TO THE MEMORY OF SIR WILLIAM MYERS

Spaniard or Portugueze! tread reverently
Upon a soldier's grave; no common heart
Lies mingled with the clod beneath thy feet.
To honours and to ample wealth was Myers
In England born; but leaving friends beloved,
And all allurements of that happy land,
His ardent spirit to the field of war
Impell'd him. Fair was his career. He faced
The perils of that memorable day,
When through the iron shower and fiery storm
Of death the dauntless host of Britain made
Their landing at Aboukir; then not less
Illustrated, than when great Nelson's hand,
As if insulted Heaven with its own wrath
Had arm'd him, smote the miscreant Frenchmen's fleet,
And with its wreck wide-floating many a league
Strew'd the rejoicing shores. What then his youth
Held forth of promise, amply was confirm'd
When Wellesley, upon Talavera's plain,
On the mock monarch won his coronet:
There when the trophies of the field were reap'd
Was he for gallant bearing eminent
When all did bravely. But his valour's orb
Shone brightest at its setting. On the field
Of Albuhera he the fusileers
Led to regain the heights, and promised them
A glorious day; a glorious day was given;
The heights were gain'd, the victory was achieved,
And Myers received from death his deathless crown.
Here to Valverde was he borne, and here
His faithful men amid this olive grove,
The olive emblem here of endless peace,
Laid him to rest. Spaniard or Portugueze,
In your good cause the British soldier fell;
Tread reverently upon his honour'd grave.

XXX (XXXIV)

FOR THE WALLS OF CIUDAD RODRIGO

HERE Craufurd fell, victorious, in the breach,
Leading his countrymen in that assault
Which won from haughty France these rescued walls;
And here intomb'd far from his native land
And kindred dust, his honour'd relics rest.
Well was he versed in war, in the Orient train'd
Beneath Cornwallis; then for many a year
Following through arduous and ill-fated fields
The Austrian banners; on the sea-like shores
Of Plata next, still by malignant stars
Pursued; and in that miserable retreat,
For which Coruña witness'd on her hills
The pledge of vengeance given. At length he saw,
Long woo'd and well deserved, the brighter face
Of Fortune, upon Coa's banks vouchsafed,
Before Almeida, when Massena found
The fourfold vantage of his numbers foil'd,
Before the Briton, and the Portugal,
There vindicating first his old renown,
And Craufurd's mind that day presiding there.
Again was her auspicious countenance
Upon Busaco's holy heights reveal'd;
And when by Torres Vedras, Wellington,
Wisely secure, defied the boastful French,
With all their power; and when Onoro's springs
Beheld that execrable enemy
Again chastised beneath the avenging arm.
Too early here his honourable course
He closed, and won his noble sepulchre.
Where should the soldier rest so worthily
As where he fell? Be thou his monument,
O City of Rodrigo, yea be thou,
To latest time, his trophy and his tomb!
Sultans, or Pharaohs of the elder world,
Lie not in Mosque or Pyramid enshrined
Thus gloriously, nor in so proud a grave.

XXXI (XXXV)

TO THE MEMORY OF MAJOR GENERAL MACKINNON

SON of an old and honourable house,
Henry Mackinnon from the Hebrides
Drew his descent, but upon English ground
An English mother bore him. Dauphiny
Beheld the blossom of his opening years;
For hoping in that genial clime to save
A child of feebler frame, his parents there
Awhile their sojourn fix'd: and thus it chanced
That in that generous season, when the heart
Yet from the world is pure and undefiled,
Napoleon Buonaparte was his friend.
The adventurous Corsican, like Henry, then
Young, and a stranger in the land of France,
Their frequent and their favour'd guest became,
Finding a cheerful welcome at all hours,
Kindness, esteem, and in the English youth
Quick sympathy of apprehensive mind
And lofty thought heroic. On the way
Of life they parted, not to meet again.
Each follow'd war, but, oh! how differently
Did the two spirits which till now had grown
Like two fair plants, it seem'd, of kindred seed,
Develope in that awful element!
For never had benignant nature shower'd
More bounteously than on Mackinnon's head

Her choicest gifts. Form, features, intellect,
Were such as might at once command and win
All hearts. In all relationships approved,
Son, brother, husband, father, friend, his life
Was beautiful; and when in tented fields,
Such as the soldier should be in the sight
Of God and man was he. Poor praise it were
To speak his worth evinced upon the banks
Of Douro, Talavera's trophied plain,
Busaco's summit, and what other days,
Many and glorious all, illustrated
His bright career. Worthier of him to say
That in the midst of camps his manly breast
Retain'd its youthful virtue; that he walk'd
Through blood and evil uncontaminate,
And that the stern necessity of war
But nurtured with its painful discipline
Thoughtful compassion in that gentle soul,
And feelings such as man should cherish still
For all of woman born. He met his death
When at Rodrigo on the breach he stood
Triumphant; to a soldier's wish it came
Instant, and in the hour of victory.
Mothers and maids of Portugal, oh bring
Your garlands here, and strew his grave with flowers;
And lead the children to his monument,
Grey-headed sires, for it is holy ground!
For tenderness and valour in his heart,
As in your own Nunalures, had made
Their habitation; for a dearer life
Never in battle hath been offered up,
Since in like cause and in unhappy day,
By Zutphen's walls the peerless Sidney fell.
'Tis said that Buonaparte, when he heard
How thus, among the multitude whose blood
Cries out to Heaven upon his guilty head,
His early friend had fallen, was touch'd with grief.
If aught it may avail him, be that thought,
That brief recurrence of humanity
In his hard heart, remember'd in his hour.

XXXII (XXXVI)

FOR THE AFFAIR AT ARROYO MOLINOS

He who may chronicle Spain's arduous strife
Against the Intruder, hath to speak of fields
Profuselier fed with blood, and victories
Borne wider on the wings of glad report;
Yet shall this town, which from the mill-stream takes
Its humble name, be storied as the spot
Where the vain Frenchman, insolent too long
Of power and of success, first saw the strength
Of England in prompt enterprize essayed,
And felt his fortunes ebb, from that day forth
Swept back upon the refluent tide of war.
Girard lay here, who late from Caceres,
Far as his active cavalry could scour,
Had pillaged and opprest the country round;
The Spaniard and the Portugueze he scorn'd,
And deem'd the British soldiers all too slow
To seize occasion, unalert in war,
And therefore brave in vain. In such belief
Secure at night he laid him down to sleep,
Nor dreamt that these disparaged enemies
With drum and trumpet should in martial charge
Sound his reveille. All day their march severe

They held through wind and drenching rain; all night
The autumnal tempest unabating raged,
While in their comfortless and open camp
They cheer'd themselves with patient hope: the storm
Was their ally, and moving in the mist,
When morning open'd, on the astonish'd foe
They burst. Soon routed horse and foot, the French
On all sides scattering, fled, on every side
Beset, and every where pursued, with loss
Of half their numbers captured, their whole stores,
And all their gather'd plunder. 'Twas a day
Of surest omen, such as fill'd with joy
True English hearts. . .No happier peals have e'er
Been roll'd abroad from town and village tower
Than gladden'd then with their exultant sound
Salopian vales; and flowing cups were brimm'd
All round the Wrekin to Sir Rowland's name.

XXXIII (XXXVII)

WRITTEN IN AN UNPUBLISHED VOLUME OF LETTERS AND MISCELLANEOUS PAPERS, BY BARRÉ CHARLES ROBERTS.

Not often hath the cold insensate earth
Closed over such fair hopes, as when the grave
Received young Barré's perishable part;
Nor death destroyed so sweet a dream of life.
Nature, who sometimes lavisheth her gifts
With fatal bounty, had conferred on him
Even such endowments as parental love
Might in its wisest prayer have ask'd of Heaven;
An intellect that, choosing for itself
The better part, went forth into the fields
Of knowledge, and with never-sated thirst
Drank of the living springs; a judgement calm
And clear; a heart affectionate; a soul
Within whose quiet sphere no vanities
Or low desires had place. Nor were the seeds
Of excellence thus largely given, and left
To struggle with impediment of clime
Austere, or niggard soil; all circumstance
Of happy fortune was to him vouchsafed;
His way of life was as through garden-walks
Wherein no thorns are seen, save such as grow,
Types of our human state, with fruits and flowers.
In all things favoured thus auspiciously,
But in his father most. An intercourse
So beautiful no former record shows
In such relationship displayed, where through
Familiar friendship's perfect confidence,
The father's ever-watchful tenderness
Meets ever in the son's entire respect
Its due return devout, and playful love
Mingles with every thing, and sheds o'er all
A sunshine of its own. Should we then say
The parents purchased at too dear a cost
This deep delight, the deepest, purest joy
Which Heaven hath here assign'd us, when they saw
Their child of hope, just in the May of life,
Beneath a slow and cankering malady,
With irremediable decay consumed,
Sink to the untimely grave? Oh, think not thus!
Nor deem that such long anguish, and the grief
Which in the inmost soul doth strike its roots
There to abide through time, can overweigh
The blessings which have been, and yet shall be!

Think not that He in Whom we live, doth mock
Our dearest aspirations! Think not love,
Genius, and virtue should inhere alone
In mere mortality, and Earth put out
The sparks which are of Heaven! We are not left
In darkness, nor devoid of hope. The Light
Of Faith hath risen to us: the vanquish'd Grave
To us the great consolatory truth
Proclaim'd that He who wounds will heal; and Death,
Opening the gates of Immortality,
The spirits whom it hath dissevered here
In everlasting union re-unite.

Keswick, 1814.

XXXIV (XXXIX)
EPITAPH

Some there will be to whom, as here they read,
While yet these lines are from the chisel sharp,
The name of Clement Francis, will recall
His countenance benign; and some who knew
What stores of knowledge and what humble thoughts,
What wise desires, what cheerful piety,
In happy union form'd the character
Which faithfully impress'd his aspect meek.
And others too there are, who in their hearts
Will bear the memory of his worth enshrined,
For tender and for reverential thoughts,
When grief hath had its course, a lifelong theme.
A little while, and these, who to the truth
Of this poor tributary strain could bear
Their witness, will themselves have pass'd away,
And this cold marble monument present
Words which can then within no living mind
Create the ideal form they once evoked;
This, then, the sole memorial of the dead.
So be it. Only that which was of earth
Hath perish'd; only that which was infirm,
Mortal, corruptible, and brought with it
The seed connate of death. A place in Time
Is given us, only that we may prepare
Our portion for Eternity: the Soul
Possesseth there what treasures for itself,
Wise to salvation, it laid up in Heaven.
O Man, take thou this lesson from the Grave!
There too all true affections shall revive,
To fade no more; all losses be restored,
All griefs be heal'd, all holy hopes fulfill'd.

INSCRIPTIONS FOR THE CALEDONIAN CANAL

[Published in *The Anniversary*, 1829.]

XXXV (XL)

1. At Clachnacharry

Athwart the island here, from sea to sea,
Between these mountain barriers, the Great Glen
Of Scotland offers to the traveller,
Through wilds impervious else, an easy path,
Along the shore of rivers and of lakes,
In line continuous, whence the waters flow
Dividing east and west. Thus had they held
For untold centuries their perpetual course
Unprofited, till in the Georgian age
This mighty work was plann'd, which should unite
The lakes, control the innavigable streams,
And through the bowels of the land deduce
A way, where vessels which must else have braved

The formidable Cape, and have essayed
The perils of the Hyperborean Sea,
Might from the Baltic to the Atlantic deep
Pass and repass at will. So when the storm
Careers abroad, may they securely here,
Through birchen groves, green fields, and pastoral hills,
Pursue their voyage home. Humanity
May boast this proud expenditure, begun
By Britain in a time of arduous war;
Through all the efforts and emergencies
Of that long strife continued, and achieved
After her triumph, even at the time
When national burdens bearing on the state
Were felt with heaviest pressure. Such expense
Is best economy. In growing wealth,
Comfort, and spreading industry, behold
The fruits immediate! And, in days to come,
Fitly shall this great British work be named
With whatsoe'er of most magnificence,
For public use, Rome in her plenitude
Of power effected, or all-glorious Greece,
Or Egypt, mother-land of all the arts.

XXXVI (XLI)

2. At Fort Augustus

Thou who hast reach'd this level where the glede,
Wheeling between the mountains in mid air,
Eastward or westward as his gyre inclines,
Descries the German or the Atlantic Sea,
Pause here; and, as thou seest the ship pursue
Her easy way serene, call thou to mind
By what exertions of victorious art
The way was open'd. Fourteen times upheaved,
The vessel hath ascended, since she changed
The salt sea water for the highland lymph;
As oft in imperceptible descent
Must, step by step, be lower'd, before she woo
The ocean breeze again. Thou hast beheld
What basins, most capacious of their kind,
Enclose her, while the obedient element
Lifts or depones its burthen. Thou hast seen
The torrent hurrying from its native hills
Pass underneath the broad canal inhumed,
Then issue harmless thence; the rivulet
Admitted by its intake peaceably,
Forthwith by gentle overfall discharged:
And haply too thou hast observed the herds
Frequent their vaulted path, unconscious they
That the wide waters on the long low arch
Above them, lie sustained. What other works
Science, audacious in emprize, hath wrought,
Meet not the eye, but well may fill the mind.
Not from the bowels of the land alone,
From lake and stream hath their diluvial wreck
Been scoop'd to form this navigable way;
Huge rivers were controll'd, or from their course
Shoulder'd aside; and at the eastern mouth,
Where the salt ooze denied a resting place,
There were the deep foundations laid, by weight
On weight immersed, and pile on pile down-driven,
Till steadfast as the everlasting rocks
The massive outwork stands. Contemplate now
What days and nights of thought, what years of toil,
What inexhaustive springs of public wealth
The vast design required; the immediate good,

The future benefit progressive still;
And thou wilt pay thy tribute of due praise
To those whose counsels, whose decrees, whose care,
For after ages formed the generous work.

XXXVII (XLII)

3. At Banavie

Where these capacious basins, by the laws
Of the subjacent element receive
The ship, descending or upraised, eight times,
From stage to stage with unfelt agency
Translated; fitliest may the marble here
Record the Architect's immortal name.
Telford it was, by whose presiding mind
The whole great work was plann'd and perfected;
Telford, who o'er the vale of Cambrian Dee,
Aloft in air, at giddy height upborne,
Carried his navigable road, and hung
High o'er Menai's straits the bending bridge;
Structures of more ambitious enterprize
Than minstrels in the age of old romance
To their own Merlin's magic lore ascribed.
Nor hath he for his native land perform'd
Less in this proud design; and where his piers
Around her coast from many a fisher's creek
Unshelter'd else, and many an ample port,
Repel the assailing storm; and where his roads
In beautiful and sinuous line far seen,
Wind with the vale, and win the long ascent,
Now o'er the deep morass sustain'd, and now
Across ravine, or glen, or estuary,
Opening a passage through the wilds subdued.

XXXVIII (XLIII)

Epitaph in Butleigh Church

Divided far by death were they, whose names
In honour here united, as in birth,
This monumental verse records. They drew
In Dorset's healthy vales their natal breath,
And from these shores beheld the ocean first,
Whereon in early youth with one accord
They chose their way of fortune; to that course
By Hood and Bridport's bright example drawn,
Their kinsmen, children of this place, and sons
Of one, who in his faithful ministry
Inculcated within these hallow'd walls
The truths in mercy to mankind reveal'd.
Worthy were these three brethren each to add
New honours to the already honour'd name:
But Arthur, in the morning of his day,
Perish'd amid the Caribbean sea,
When the Pomona, by a hurricane
Whirl'd, riven and overwhelm'd, with all her crew
Into the deep went down. A longer date
To Alexander was assign'd, for hope,
For fair ambition, and for fond regret,
Alas, how short! for duty, for desert,
Sufficing; and while Time preserves the roll
Of Britain's naval feats, for good report.
A boy, with Cook he rounded the great globe;
A youth, in many a celebrated fight
With Rodney had his part; and having reach'd
Life's middle stage, engaging ship to ship,
When the French Hercules, a gallant foe,
Struck to the British Mars his three-striped flag,
He fell, in the moment of his victory.

Here his remains in sure and certain hope
Are laid, until the hour when Earth and Sea
Shall render up their dead. One brother yet
Survived, with Keppel and with Rodney train'd
In battles, with the Lord of Nile approved,
Ere in command he worthily upheld
Old England's high prerogative. In the east,
The west, the Baltic and the Midland seas,
Yea, wheresoever hostile fleets have plough'd
The ensanguined deep, his thunders have been heard,
His flag in brave defiance hath been seen;
And bravest enemies at Sir Samuel's name
Felt fatal presage in their inmost heart,
Of unavertible defeat foredoom'd.
Thus in the path of glory he rode on,
Victorious alway, adding praise to praise;
Till full of honours, not of years, beneath
The venom of the infected clime he sunk,
On Coromandel's coast, completing there
His service, only when his life was spent.

To the three brethren, Alexander's son
(Sole scion he in whom their line survived),
With English feeling, and the deeper sense
Of filial duty, consecrates this tomb.

1827.

XXXIX (XLIV)

EPITAPH

To Butler's venerable memory
By private gratitude for public worth
This monument is raised, here where twelve years
Meekly the blameless Prelate exercised
His pastoral charge; and whither, though removed
A little while to Durham's wider See,
His mortal relics were convey'd to rest.
Born in dissent, and in the school of schism
Bred, he withstood the withering influence
Of that unwholesome nurture. To the Church,
In strength of mind mature and judgment clear,
A convert, in sincerity of heart
Seeking the truth, deliberately convinced,
And finding there the truth he sought, he came.
In honour must his high desert be held
While there is any virtue, any praise;
For he it was whose gifted intellect
First apprehended, and developed first
The analogy connate, which in its course
And constitution Nature manifests
To the Creator's word and will divine;
And in the depth of that great argument
Laying his firm foundation, built thereon
Proofs never to be shaken of the truths
Reveal'd from Heaven in mercy to mankind;
Allying thus Philosophy with Faith,
And finding in things seen and known, the type
And evidence of those within the veil.

CARMEN TRIUMPHALE

FOR THE COMMENCEMENT OF THE YEAR 1814

'Illi justitiam confirmavere triumphi,
Praesentes docuere Deos.'—CLAUDIAN.

[Published together with *Carmina Aulica* in one volume in 1814. The first four stanzas were published in *The Courier* for January 8, 1814. See also Note to the 'Ode Written during the Negotiations with Buonaparte in January, 1814,' p. 755.
Some extracts from Southey's notes to this Ode are printed at the end of the poem. They are of interest as illustrating the attitude of British political parties during the war with Napoleon, and the mistaken calculations of the *Edinburgh Review*.]

I

In happy hour doth he receive
The Laurel, meed of famous Bards of yore,
Which Dryden and diviner Spenser wore, . .
In happy hour, and well may he rejoice,
Whose earliest task must be
To raise the exultant hymn for victory,
And join a nation's joy with harp and voice,
Pouring the strain of triumph on the wind,
Glory to God, his song, Deliverance for Mankind!

II

Wake, lute and harp! My soul take up the strain!
Glory to God! Deliverance for Mankind!
Joy, . . for all Nations, joy! But most for thee,
Who hast so nobly fill'd thy part assign'd,
O England! O my glorious native land!
For thou in evil days didst stand
Against leagued Europe all in arms array'd,
Single and undismay'd,
Thy hope in Heaven and in thine own right hand.
Now are thy virtuous efforts overpaid,
Thy generous counsels now their guerdon find, . .
Glory to God! Deliverance for Mankind!

III

Dread was the strife, for mighty was the foe
Who sought with his whole strength thy overthrow.
The Nations bow'd before him; some in war
Subdued, some yielding to superior art;
Submiss, they follow'd his victorious car.
Their Kings, like Satraps, waited round his throne;
For Britain's ruin and their own,
By force or fraud in monstrous league combined.
Alone, in that disastrous hour,
Britain stood firm and braved his power;
Alone she fought the battles of mankind.

IV

O virtue which, above all former fame,
Exalts her venerable name!
O joy of joys for every British breast!
That with that mighty peril full in view,
The Queen of Ocean to herself was true!
That no weak heart, no abject mind possess'd
Her counsels, to abase her lofty crest, . .
(Then had she sunk in everlasting shame),
But ready still to succour the oppress'd,
Her Red Cross floated on the waves unfurl'd,
Offering Redemption to the groaning world

V

First from his trance the heroic
Spaniard woke;
His chains he broke,
And casting off his neck the treacherous
yoke,
He call'd on England, on his generous
foe:
For well he knew that wheresoe'er
Wise policy prevail'd, or brave despair,
Thither would Britain's liberal
succours flow,
Her arm be present there.
Then, too, regenerate Portugal
display'd
Her ancient virtue, dormant all-too-
long.
Rising against intolerable wrong,
On England, on her old ally, for aid
The faithful nation call'd in her
distress:
And well that old ally the call
obey'd,
Well was that faithful friendship then
repaid.

VI

Say from thy trophied field how well,
Vimeiro! Rocky Douro tell!
And thou, Busaco, on whose sacred
height
The astonished Carmelite,
While those unwonted thunders shook
his cell,
Join'd with his prayers the fervour of
the fight.
Bear witness those old Towers,[1] where
many a day
Waiting with foresight calm the fitting
hour,
The Wellesley, gathering strength in
wise delay,
Defied the Tyrant's undivided
power.
Swore not the boastful Frenchman in
his might,
Into the sea to drive his Island-foe?
Tagus and Zezere, in secret night,
Ye saw that host of ruffians take their
flight![2]
And in the Sun's broad light
Onoro's Springs[3] beheld their over-
throw.

VII

Patient of loss, profuse of life,
Meantime had Spain endured the strife;
And though she saw her cities yield,
Her armies scatter'd in the field,
Her strongest bulwarks fall;
The danger undismay'd she view'd,
Knowing that nought could e'er appal
The Spaniards' fortitude.[4]
What though the Tyrant, drunk with
power,
Might vaunt himself, in impious hour,
Lord and Disposer of this earthly ball?
Her cause is just, and Heaven is
over all.

VIII

Therefore no thought of fear debased
Her judgment, nor her acts disgraced.
To every ill, but not to shame resign'd,
All sufferings, all calamities she bore.
She bade the people call to mind
Their heroes of the days of yore,
Pelayo and the Campeador,[5]
With all who, once in battle strong,
Lived still in story and in song.
Against the Moor, age after age,
Their stubborn warfare did they wage;
Age after age, from sire to son,
The hallowed sword was handed down;
Nor did they from that warfare cease,
And sheathe that hallow'd sword in
peace,
Until the work was done.

IX

Thus, in the famous days of yore,
Their fathers triumph'd o'er the Moor.
They gloried in his overthrow,
But touch'd not with reproach his
gallant name;
For fairly, and with hostile aim profest,
The Moor had rear'd his haughty crest,
An open, honourable foe;
But as a friend the treacherous French-
man came,
And Spain received him as a guest.
Think what your fathers were!
she cried,
Think what ye are, in sufferings tried;
And think of what your sons must
be . .
Even as ye make them . . slaves or free!

X

Strains such as these from Spain's three seas,
And from the farthest Pyrenees,
Rung through the region. Vengeance was the word;
One impulse to all hearts at once was given;
From every voice the sacred cry was heard,
And borne abroad by all the winds of Heaven.
Heaven too, to whom the Spaniards look'd for aid,
A spirit equal to the hour bestow'd;
And gloriously the debt they paid,
Which to their valiant ancestors they owed; [France
And gloriously against the power of
Maintain'd their children's proud inheritance.
Their steady purpose no defeat could move, [mind;
No horrors could abate their constant
Hope had its source and resting-place above,
And they, to loss of all on earth resign'd,
Suffer'd, to save their country, and mankind.
What strain heroic might suffice to tell,
How Zaragoza stood, and how she fell?
Ne'er since yon sun began his daily round,
Was higher virtue, holier valour, found
Than on that consecrated ground.

XI

Alone the noble Nation stood,
When from Coruña, in the main,
The star of England set in blood.
Ere long on Talavera's plain,
That star resplendent rose again;
And though that day was doom'd to be
A day of frustrate victory,
Not vainly bled the brave;
For French and Spaniard there might see [save;
That England's arm was strong to
Fair promise there the Wellesley gave,
And well in sight of earth and Heaven
Did he redeem the pledge which there was given.

XII

Lord of Conquest, heir of Fame,
From rescued Portugal he came.
Rodrigo's walls in vain oppose;
In vain thy bulwarks, Badajoz;
And Salamanca's heights proclaim
The Conqueror's praise, the Wellesley's name.
Oh, had the sun stood still that hour,
When Marmont and his broken power
Fled from their field of shame!
Spain felt through all her realms the electric blow;
Cadiz in peace expands her gates again;
And Betis, who, to bondage long resign'd,
Flow'd mournfully along the silent plain,
Into her joyful bosom unconfined
Receives once more the treasures of the main.

XIII

What now shall check the Wellesley, when at length
Onward he goes, rejoicing in his strength?
From Douro, from Castille's extended plain,
The foe, a numerous band,
Retire; amid the heights which overhang
Dark Ebro's bed, they think to make their stand.
He reads their purpose, and prevents their speed;
And still as they recede,
Impetuously he presses on their way;
Till by Vittoria's walls they stood at bay,
And drew their battle up in fair array.

XIV

Vain their array, their valour vain
There did the practised Frenchman find
A master arm, a master mind!
Behold his veteran army driven
Like dust before the breath of Heaven,

Like leaves before the autumnal wind!
Now, Britain, now thy brow with laurels bind;
Raise now the song of joy for rescued Spain!
And Europe, take thou up the awakening strain . .
Glory to God! Deliverance for Mankind!

XV

From Spain the living spark went forth:
The flame hath caught, the flame is spread!
It warms, . . it fires the farthest North.
Behold! the awaken'd Muscovite
Meets the Tyrant in his might; [6]
The Brandenburg, at Freedom's call,
Rises more glorious from his fall;
And Frederick, best and greatest of the name,
Treads in the path of duty and of fame.
See Austria from her painful trance awake!
The breath of God goes forth, . . the dry bones shake!
Up Germany! . . with all thy nations rise!
Land of the virtuous and the wise,
No longer let that free, that mighty mind,
Endure its shame! She rose as from the dead,
She broke her chains upon the oppressor's head . . [7]
Glory to God! Deliverance for Mankind!

XVI

Open thy gates, O Hanover! display
Thy loyal banners to the day;
Receive thy old illustrious line once more!
Beneath an Upstart's yoke opprest,
Long hath it been thy fortune to deplore
That line, whose fostering and paternal sway
So many an age thy grateful children blest.
The yoke is broken now: . . A mightier hand
Hath dash'd, . . in pieces dash'd, . . the iron rod.
To meet her Princes, the deliver'd land
Pours her rejoicing multitudes abroad;
The happy bells, from every town and tower,
Roll their glad peals upon the joyful wind;
And from all hearts and tongues, with one consent,
The high thanksgiving strain to heaven is sent, . .
Glory to God! Deliverance for Mankind!

XVII

Egmont and Horn, heard ye that holy cry,
Martyrs of Freedom, from your seats in Heaven?
And William the Deliverer, doth thine eye
Regard from yon empyreal realm the land
For which thy blood was given?
What ills hath that poor Country suffer'd long!
Deceived, despised, and plunder'd, and oppress'd,
Mockery and insult aggravating wrong!
Severely she her errors hath atoned,
And long in anguish groan'd,
Wearing the patient semblance of despair,
While fervent curses rose with every prayer:
In mercy Heaven at length its ear inclined;
The avenging armies of the North draw nigh,
Joy for the injured Hollander! . . the cry
Of Orange rends the sky!
All hearts are now in one good cause combined, . .
Once more that flag triumphant floats on high, . .
Glory to God! Deliverance for Mankind!

XVIII

When shall the Dove go forth ? Oh when
Shall Peace return among the Sons of Men ?
Hasten benignant Heaven the blessed day !
Justice must go before,
And Retribution must make plain the way ;
Force must be crushed by Force,
The power of Evil by the power of Good,
Ere Order bless the suffering world once more,
Or Peace return again.
Hold then right on in your auspicious course,
Ye Princes, and ye People, hold right on !
Your task not yet is done :
Pursue the blow, . . ye know your foe, . .
Complete the happy work so well begun.
Hold on, and be your aim with all your strength
Loudly proclaim'd and steadily pursued ;
So shall this fatal Tyranny at length
Before the arms of Freedom fall subdued.
Then, when the waters of the flood abate,
The Dove her resting-place secure may find :
And France restored, and shaking off her chain,
Shall join the Avengers in the joyful strain,
Glory to God ! Deliverance for Mankind !

NOTES TO CARMEN TRIUMPHALE

[1] Torres Vedras. *Turres Veteres*, . . a name so old as to have been given when the Latin tongue was the language of Portugal. This town is said to have been founded by the Turduli, a short time before the commencement of the Christian Æra.

In remembering the lines of Torres Vedras, the opinion of the wise men of the North ought not to be forgotten, 'If they (the French) do not make an effort to drive us out of Portugal, it is because we are better there than any where else. We fear they will not leave us on the Tagus many days longer than suits their own purposes.'—*Edinburgh Review*, No. XXVII, p. 263.

The opinion is delivered with happy precision of language: . . Our troops were indeed, to use the same neat and felicitous expression, 'better there than any where else.'

[2] No cruelties recorded in history exceed those which were systematically committed by the French during their retreat from Portugal. 'Their conduct,' (says Lord Wellington in his dispatch of the 14th of March, 1811,) 'throughout this retreat, has been marked by a barbarity seldom equalled, and never surpassed.

'Even in the towns of Torres Novas, Thomar, and Pernes, in which the head-quarters of some of the corps had been for four months, and in which the inhabitants had been induced by promises of good treatment to remain, they were plundered, and many of their houses destroyed on the night the enemy withdrew from their position ; and they have since burnt every town and village through which they have passed. The Convent of Alcobaça was burnt by order from the French head-quarters. The Bishop's Palace, and the whole town of Leyria, in which General Drouet had had his head-quarters, shared the same fate ; and there is not an inhabitant of the country, of any class or description, who has had any dealing or communication with the French army who has not had reason to repent of it, or to complain of them. This is the mode in which the promises have been performed, and the assurances have been fulfilled, which were held out in the proclamation of the French commander-in-chief, in which he told the inhabitants of Portugal, that he was not come to make war upon them, but with a powerful army of one hundred and ten thousand men to drive the English into the sea. It is to be hoped, that the example of what has occurred in this country will teach the people of this and other nations what value they ought to place

on such promises and assurances, and that there is no security for life or for any thing that renders life valuable, except in decided resistance to the enemy.'

As exact an account of these atrocities was collected as it was possible to obtain, . . and that record will for ever make the French name detested in Portugal. In the single diocese of Coimbra, 2,969 persons, men, women, and children, were murdered, . . every one with some shocking circumstance of aggravated cruelty. . . 'Nem huma só das 2969 mortes commettidas pelo inimigo deixou de ser atroz e dolorosissima.' (Breve Memoria dos Estragos Causados no Bispado de Coimbra pelo Exercito Francez, commandado pelo General Massena. Extrahida das Enformaçoens que deram os Reverendos Parocos, e remettida a Junta dos Socorros da Subscripsam Britannica, pelo Reverendo Provisor Governador do mesmo Bispado, p. 12.) Some details are given in this brief Memorial. 'A de tel forfaits,' says J. J. Rousseau, 'celui qui détourne ses regards est un lâche, un déserteur de la justice: la véritable humanité les envisage pour les connoître, pour les juger, pour les détester.' (*Le Lévite d'Ephraïm.*) I will not, however, in this place repeat abominations which at once outrage humanity and disgrace human nature.

When the French, in 1792, entered Spire, some of them began to commit excesses which would soon have led to a general sack. Custine immediately ordered a captain, two officers, and a whole company to be shot. This dreadful example, he told the National Convention, he considered as the only means of saving the honour of the French nation, . . and it met with the approbation of the whole army. But the French armies had not then been systematically brutalized. It was reserved for Buonaparte to render them infamous, as well as to lead them to destruction.

The French soldier, says Capmany, is executioner and robber at the same time: he leaves the unhappy wretch who is delivered over to his mercy, naked to the skin, . . stripping off the clothes that they may not be torn by the musket-shot! . . The pen falls from my hand, and I cannot proceed!

'Para que se junte á esta crueldad la mayor infamia, el soldado Frances es verdugo y ladron en una pieza; dexa en cueros vivos al malaventurado que entregan á su discrecion, quitandole la ropa antes que los fusilazos se la destrozen. La pluma se cae de la mano, y no puede proseguir.'—*Centinela, contra Franceses*, P. ii, p. 35.

Yet the *Edinburgh Review* says, 'the hatred of the name of a Frenchman in Spain has been such as the reality will by no means justify; and the detestation of the French government has, among the inferior orders, been carried to a pitch wholly unauthorized by its proceedings towards them.'—No. XXVII, p. 262. This passage might be read with astonishment, if any thing absurd, any thing mischievous, or any thing false, could excite surprise when it comes from that quarter.

[3] Fuentes d'Onoro. This name has sometimes been rendered Fountains of Honour, by an easy mistake, or a pardonable licence.

[4] 'The fate of Spain, we think, *is decided*, and that fine and *misguided* country has probably yielded, by this time, to the fate which has fallen on the greater part of continental Europe. *Her European dominions have yielded already to the unrelaxing grasp of the insatiable conqueror.*'—*Edinburgh Review*, No. XXVI, p. 298.

'The fundamental position which we ventured to lay down respecting the Spanish question was this: . . that the spirit of the people, however enthusiastic and universal, was in its nature more uncertain and short-lived, more likely to be extinguished by reverses, or to go out of itself amidst the delays of a protracted contest, than the steady, regular, moderate feeling which calls out disciplined troops, and marshals them under known leaders, and supplies them by systematic arrangements: . . a proposition so plain and obvious, that if it escaped ridicule as a truism, it might have been reasonably expected to avoid the penalties of heresy and paradox. *The event has indeed woefully proved its truth.*'—*Edinburgh Review*, No. XXVII, p. 246.

These gentlemen could see no principle of permanence in the character of the Spaniards, and no proof of it in their history; . . and they could discover no principle of dissolution in the system of Buonaparte; . . a system founded upon force and falsehood, in direct opposition to the interest of his own subjects and to the feelings of human nature.

[5] The Cid, Rodrigo Diaz de Bivar.

[6] 'Ecce iterum Crispinus!' What says the *Edinburgh Review* concerning Russia? 'Considering how little that power has shown itself capable of effecting for the salvation of Europe, . . how wretched the

state of its subjects is under the present government, . . how trifling an acquisition of strength the common enemy could expect to obtain from the entire possession of its resources, we acknowledge that we should contemplate with great composure any change which might lay the foundation of future improvement, and scatter the forces of France over the dominion of the Czars.'—No. XXVIII, p. 460.

This is a choice passage. The reasoning is worthy of the writer's judgement, the feeling perfectly consistent with his *liberality*, and the conclusion as consistent with his politics.

[7] Hear the Edinburgh Reviewer! 'It would be as chimerical to expect a mutiny among the vassal states of France who are the most impatient of her yoke, as amongst the inhabitants of Bourdeaux, or the conscripts of the year 1808 and 1809. In making this comparison, we are indeed putting the case much more strongly against France than the facts warrant, for with the exception of Holland, and the States into which the conscription has been introduced, either immediately, or by means of large requisitions of men made to their Governments,* the changes effected by the French invasion have been favourable to the individual happiness of the inhabitants †, so that the hatred of France is liable to considerable diminution, inasmuch as the national antipathy and spirit of independence are gradually undermined by the solid benefits which the change of masters has conferred.'—No. XXVIII, p. 458.

Great as a statesman, profound as a philosopher, amiable as an optimist of the Pangloss school, . . but not altogether fortunate as a Prophet!

* N.B. These little exceptions include all the countries which were annexed to the French Empire, all Italy, and all the States of the Confederation of the Rhine.

† Particularly the commercial part of them.

EPISTLE TO ALLAN CUNNINGHAM

[First published in *The Anniversary*, 1829.]

Well, Heaven be thank'd! friend Allan, here I am,
Once more to that dear dwelling place return'd,
Where I have pass'd the whole mid stage of life,
Not idly, certes; not unworthily, . .
So let me hope: where Time upon my head
Hath laid his frore and monitory hand;
And when this poor frail earthly tabernacle
Shall be dissolved, . . it matters not how soon
Or late, in God's good time, . . where I would fain
Be gathered to my children, earth to earth.

Needless it were to say how willingly
I bade the huge metropolis farewell,
Its din, and dust, and dirt, and smoke, and smut,
Thames' water, paviour's ground, and London sky;
Weary of hurried days and restless nights,
Watchmen, whose office is to murder sleep
When sleep might else have weigh'd one's eyelids down,
Rattle of carriages, and roll of carts,
And tramp of iron hoofs; and worse than all, . .
Confusion being worse confounded then,
With coachmen's quarrels and with footmen's shouts,
My next-door neighbours, in a street not yet
Macadamized, (me miserable!) *at home*;
For then had we from midnight until morn
House-quakes, street-thunders, and door-batteries.
O Government! in thy wisdom and thy want,
Tax knockers; . . in compassion to the sick,
And those whose sober habits are not yet

Inverted, topsy-turvying night and day,
Tax them more heavily than thou hast charged
Armorial bearings and bepowder'd pates.
And thou, O Michael, ever to be praised,
Angelic among Taylors! for thy laws
Antifuliginous, extend those laws
Till every chimney its own smoke consume,
And give thenceforth thy dinners unlampoon'd.
Escaping from all this, the very whirl
Of mail-coach wheels bound outward from Lad-lane,
Was peace and quietness. Three hundred miles
Of homeward way seem'd to the body rest,
And to the mind repose.
Donne[1] did not hate
More perfectly that city. Not for all
Its social, all its intellectual joys, . .
Which having touch'd, I may not condescend
To name aught else the Demon of the place
Might for his lure hold forth; . . not even for these
Would I forego gardens and green-field walks,
And hedge-row trees, and stiles, and shady lanes,
And orchards, were such ordinary scenes
Alone to me accessible as those
Wherein I learnt in infancy to love
The sights and sounds of Nature; . . wholesome sights
Gladdening the eye that they refresh; and sounds
Which, when from life and happiness they spring,
Bear with them to the yet unharden'd heart
A sense that thrills its cords of sympathy;

[1] This poet begins his second Satire thus:—

'Sir, though (I thank God for it) I do hate
Perfectly all this town, yet there 's one state
In all ill things so excellently best,
That hate towards them breeds pity towards the rest.'

Or, when proceeding from insensate things,
Give to tranquillity a voice wherewith
To woo the ear and win the soul attuned; . .
Oh not for all that London might bestow
Would I renounce the genial influences
And thoughts and feelings to be found where'er
We breathe beneath the open sky, and see
Earth's liberal bosom. Judge then by thyself,
Allan, true child of Scotland, . . thou who art
So oft in spirit on thy native hills,
And yonder Solway shores, . . a poet thou,
Judge by thyself how strong the ties which bind
A poet to his home; when, . . making thus
Large recompense for all that haply else
Might seem perversely or unkindly done, . .
Fortune hath set his happy habitacle
Among the ancient hills, near mountain streams
And lakes pellucid, in a land sublime
And lovely as those regions of Romance
Where his young fancy in its day-dreams roam'd,
Expatiating in forests wild and wide,
Loëgrian, or of dearest Faery-land.

Yet, Allan, of the cup of social joy
No man drinks freelier, nor with heartier thirst,
Nor keener relish, where I see around
Faces which I have known and loved so long,
That when he prints a dream upon my brain
Dan Morpheus takes them for his readiest types.
And therefore in that loathed metropolis
Time measured out to me some golden hours.
They were not leaden-footed while the clay
Beneath the patient touch of Chantrey's hand

Grew to the semblance of my lineaments.
Lit up in memory's landscape, like green spots
Of sunshine, are the mornings, when in talk
With him and thee, and Bedford (my true friend
Of forty years), I saw the work proceed,
Subject the while myself to no restraint,
But pleasureably in frank discourse engaged:
Pleased too, and with no unbecoming pride
To think this countenance, such as it is,
So oft by rascally mislikeness wrong'd,
Should faithfully to those who in his works
Have seen the inner man pourtray'd, be shown,
And in enduring marble should partake
Of our great sculptor's immortality.

I have been libell'd, Allan, as thou knowest,
Through all degrees of calumny; but they
Who fix one's name for public sale beneath
A set of features slanderously unlike,
Are the worst libellers. Against the wrong
Which they inflict Time hath no remedy.
Injuries there are which Time redresseth best,
Being more sure in judgement, though perhaps
Slower in process even than the court
Where justice, tortoise-footed and mole-eyed,
Sleeps undisturb'd, fann'd by the lulling wings
Of harpies at their prey. We soon live down
Evil or good report, if undeserved.
Let then the dogs of Faction bark and bay,
Its bloodhounds, savaged by a cross of wolf,
Its full-bred kennel from the Blatant-beast;
And from my lady's gay veranda, let
Her pamper'd lap-dog with his fetid breath
In bold bravado join, and snap and growl,
With petulant consequentialness elate,
There in his imbecility at once
Ridiculous and safe; though all give cry,
Whiggery's sleek spaniels, and its lurchers lean,
Its poodles by unlucky training marr'd,
Mongrel and cur and bob-tail, let them yelp
Till weariness and hoarseness shall at length
Silence the noisy pack; meantime be sure
I will not stoop for stones to cast among them.
The foumarts and the skunks may be secure
In their own scent; and for that viler swarm,
The vermin of the press, both those that skip,
And those that creep and crawl, I do not catch
And pin them for exposure on the page,
Their filth is their defence.
But I appeal
Against the limner's and the graver's wrong;
Their evil works survive them. Bilderdijk,
Whom I am privileged to call my friend,
Suffering by graphic libels in likewise,
Gave his wrath vent in verse. Would I could give
The life and spirit of his vigorous Dutch,
As his dear consort hath transfused my strains
Into her native speech; and made them known
On Rhine and Yssel, and rich Amstel's banks;
And wheresoe'er the voice of Vondel still
Is heard, and still Antonides and Hooft
Are living agencies; and Father Cats,
The household poet, teacheth in his songs
The love of all things lovely, all things pure:
Best poet, who delights the cheerful mind
Of childhood, stores with moral strength the heart

Of youth, with wisdom maketh mid-life rich,
And fills with quiet tears the eyes of age.

Hear then in English rhyme how Bilderdijk
Describes his wicked portraits, one by one.

'A madman who from Bedlam hath broke loose;
An honest fellow of the numskull race;
And pappyer-headed still, a very goose
Staring with eyes agast and vacant face;
A Frenchman who would mirthfully display
On some poor idiot his malicious wit;
And lastly, one who, train'd up in the way
Of worldly craft, hath not forsaken it,
But hath served Mammon with his whole intent,
A thing of Nature's worst materials made,
Low-minded, stupid, base and insolent.
I, . . I, . . a Poet, . . have been thus pourtray'd.
Can ye believe that my true effigy
Among these vile varieties is found?
What thought, or line, or word, hath fallen from me
In all my numerous works whereon to ground
The opprobrious notion? Safely I may smile
At these, acknowledging no likeness here.
But worse is yet to come; so, soft awhile!
For now in potter's earth must I appear,
And in such workmanship, that, sooth to say,
Humanity disowns the imitation,
And the dolt image is not worth its clay.
Then comes there one who will to admiration
In plastic wax my perfect face present;
And what of his performance comes at last?
Folly itself in every lineament!
Its consequential features overcast
With the coxcombical and shallow laugh
Of one who would, for condescension, hide,
Yet in his best behaviour, can but half
Suppress the scornfulness of empty pride.'

'And who is Bilderdijk?' methinks thou sayest,
A ready question; yet which, trust me, Allan,
Would not be ask'd, had not the curse that came
From Babel, clipt the wings of Poetry.
Napoleon ask'd him once with cold fix'd look,
'Art thou then in the world of letters known?'
'I have deserved to be,' the Hollander
Replied, meeting that proud imperial look
With calm and proper confidence, and eye
As little wont to turn away abash'd
Before a mortal presence. He is one
Who hath received upon his constant breast
The sharpest arrows of adversity;
Whom not the clamours of the multitude
Demanding in their madness and their might
Iniquitous things, could shake in his firm mind;
Nor the strong hand of instant tyranny,
From the straight path of duty turn aside.
But who in public troubles, in the wreck
Of his own fortunes, in proscription, exile,
Want, obloquy, ingratitude, neglect,
And what severer trials Providence
Sometimes inflicteth, chastening whom it loves,
In all, through all, and over all, hath borne
An equal heart, as resolute toward
The world, as humbly and religiously
Beneath his heavenly Father's rod resign'd.
Right-minded, happy-minded, righteous man,
True lover of his country and his kind;
In knowledge, and in inexhaustive stores

Of native genius rich; philosopher,
Poet, and sage. The language of a State
Inferior in illustrious deeds to none,
But circumscribed by narrow bounds, and now
Sinking in irrecoverable decline,
Hath pent within its sphere a name wherewith
Europe should else have rung from side to side.

Such, Allan, is the Hollander to whom
Esteem and admiration have attach'd
My soul, not less than pre-consent of mind,
And gratitude for benefits, when being
A stranger, sick, and in a foreign land,
He took me like a brother to his house,
And ministered to me, and made a time
Which had been wearisome and careful else,
So pleasurable, that in my kalendar
There are no whiter days. 'Twill be a joy
For us to meet in Heaven, though we should look
Upon each other's earthly face no more.
. . This is this world's complexion! 'cheerful thoughts
Bring sad thoughts to the mind,' and these again
Give place to calm content, and steadfast hope,
And happy faith assured. . . Return we now,
With such transition as our daily life
Imposes in its wholesome discipline,
To a lighter strain; and from the gallery
Of the Dutch Poet's mis-resemblances
Pass into mine; where I shall show thee, Allan,
Such an array of villainous visages,
That if among them all there were but one
Which as a likeness could be proved upon me,
It were enough to make me in mere shame
Take up an alias, and forswear myself.

Whom have we first? A dainty gentleman,
His sleepy eyes half-closed, and countenance
To no expression stronger than might suit
A simper, capable of being moved:
Sawney and sentimental; with an air
So lack-thought and so lackadaisycal,
You might suppose the volume in his hand
Must needs be Zimmermann on Solitude.

Then comes a jovial landlord, who hath made it
Part of his trade to be the shoeing horn
For his commercial customers. God Bacchus
Hath not a thirstier votary. Many a pipe
Of Porto's vintage hath contributed
To give his cheeks that deep carmine engrain'd,
And many a runlet of right Nantes, I ween,
Hath suffer'd percolation through that trunk,
Leaving behind it in the boozey eyes
A swoln and red suffusion, glazed and dim.

Our next is in the evangelical line,
A leaden-visaged specimen; demure,
Because he hath put on his Sunday's face;
Dull by formation, by complexion sad,
By bile, opinions, and dyspepsy sour.
One of the sons of Jack, . . I know not which,
For Jack hath a most numerous progeny, . .
Made up for Mr. Colburn's Magazine
This pleasant composite; a bust supplied
The features; look, expression, character,
Are of the artist's fancy and free grace.
Such was that fellow's birth and parentage.
The rascal proved prolific; one of his breed,
By Docteur Pichot introduced in France,
Passes for Monsieur Sooté; and another, . .

An uglier miscreant too, . . the brothers Schumann
And their most cruel copper-scratcher Zschoch,
From Zwickau sent abroad through Germany.
I wish the Schumen and the copper-scratcher
No worse misfortune for their recompence,
Than to encounter such a cut-throat face
In the Black Forest or the Odenwald.

And now is there a third derivative
From Mr. Colburn's composite, which late
The Arch-Pirate Galignani hath prefix'd,
A spurious portrait to a faithless life,
And bearing lyingly the libell'd name
Of Lawrence, impudently there insculpt.

The bust that was the innocent forefather
To all this base, abominable brood,
I blame not, Allan. 'Twas the work of Smith,
A modest, mild, ingenious man, and errs,
Where erring, only because over-true,
Too close a likeness for similitude;
Fixing to every part and lineament
Its separate character, and missing thus
That which results from all.
Sir Smug comes next;
Allan, I own Sir Smug! I recognize
That visage with its dull sobriety;
I see it duly as the day returns,
When at the looking-glass with lather'd chin
And razor-weapon'd hand I sit, the face
Composed and apprehensively intent
Upon the necessary operation
About to be perform'd, with touch, alas,
Not always confident of hair-breadth skill.
Even in such sober sadness and constrain'd
Composure cold, the faithful Painter's eye
Had fix'd me like a spell, and I could feel
My features stiffen as he glanced upon them.
And yet he was a man whom I loved dearly,
My fellow-traveller, my familiar friend,
My household guest. But when he look'd upon me,
Anxious to exercise his excellent art,
The countenance he knew so thoroughly
Was gone, and in its stead there sate Sir Smug.

Under the graver's hand, Sir Smug became
Sir Smouch, . . a son of Abraham. Now albeit,
For rather would I trace my lineage thence
Than with the oldest line of Peers or Kings
Claim consanguinity, that cast of features
Would ill accord with me, who in all forms
Of pork, baked, roasted, toasted, boil'd or broil'd,
Fresh, salted, pickled, seasoned, moist or dry,
Whether ham, bacon, sausage, souse or brawn,
Leg, bladebone, baldrib, griskin, chine, or chop,
Profess myself a genuine Philopig.

It was, however, as a Jew whose portion
Had fallen unto him in a goodly land
Of loans, of omnium, and of three per cents,
That Messrs. Percy of the Anecdote-firm
Presented me unto their customers.
Poor Smouch endured a worse judaization
Under another hand. In this next stage
He is on trial at the Old Bailey, charged
With dealing in base coin. That he is guilty
No Judge or Jury could have half a doubt
When they saw the culprit's face; and he himself,
As you may plainly see, is comforted
By thinking he has just contrived to keep

Out of rope's reach, and will come off this time
For transportation.
Stand thou forth for trial,
Now, William Darton, of the Society
Of Friends called Quakers; thou who in 4th month
Of the year 24, on Holborn Hill,
At No. 58., didst wilfully,
Falsely, and knowing it was falsely done,
Publish upon a card, as Robert Southey's,
A face which might be just as like Tom Fool's,
Or John, or Richard Any-body-else's!
What had I done to thee, thou William Darton,
That thou shouldst for the lucre of base gain,
Yea, for the sake of filthy fourpences,
Palm on my countrymen that face for mine?
O William Darton, let the Yearly Meeting
Deal with thee for that falseness! All the rest
Are traceable; Smug's Hebrew family;
The German who might properly adorn
A gibbet or a wheel, and Monsieur Sooté,
Sons of Fitzbust the Evangelical; . .
I recognize all these unlikenesses,
Spurious abominations though they be,
Each filiated on some original;
But thou, Friend Darton, and . . observe me, man,
Only in courtesy, and *quasi* Quaker,
I call thee Friend! . . hadst no original;
No likeness or unlikeness, *silhouette*,
Outline, or plaster, representing me,
Whereon to form thy misrepresentation.
If I guess rightly at the pedigree
Of thy bad groatsworth, thou didst get a barber
To personate my injured Laureateship;
An advertising barber, . . one who keeps
A bear, and when he puts to death poor Bruin
Sells his grease, fresh as from the carcass cut,
Pro bono publico, the price per pound
Twelve shillings and no more. From such a barber,
O unfriend Darton! was that portrait made
I think, or peradventure from his block.

Next comes a minion worthy to be set
In a wooden frame; and here I might invoke
Avenging Nemesis, if I did not feel
Just now God Cynthius pluck me by the ear.
But, Allan, in what shape God Cynthius comes,
And wherefore he admonisheth me thus,
Nor thou nor I will tell the world; hereafter
The commentators, my Malones and Reids,
May if they can. For in my gallery
Though there remaineth undescribed good store,
Yet 'of enough enough, and now no more,'
(As honest old George Gascoigne said of yore,)
Save only a last couplet to express
That I am always truly yours,

R. S.

Keswick, August, 1828.

MADOC.

'OMNE SOLUM FORTI PATRIA.'

TO

CHARLES WATKIN WILLIAMS WYNN,

THIS POEM

WAS ORIGINALLY INSCRIBED, IN 1805,

AS A TOKEN OF SIXTEEN YEARS OF UNINTERRUPTED FRIENDSHIP;

AND IS NOW RE-INSCRIBED WITH THE SAME FEELING,

AFTER AN INTERVAL OF THIRTY-TWO.

PREFACE TO THE FIRST EDITION

THE historical facts on which this Poem is founded may be related in a few words. On the death of Owen Gwyneth, king of North Wales, A.D. 1169, his children disputed the succession. Yorwerth, the elder, was set aside without a struggle, as being incapacitated by a blemish in his face. Hoel, though illegitimate, and born of an Irish mother, obtained possession of the throne for a while, till he was defeated and slain by David, the eldest son of the late king by a second wife. The conqueror, who then succeeded without opposition, slew Yorwerth, imprisoned Rodri, and hunted others of his brethren into exile. But Madoc, meantime, abandoned his barbarous country, and sailed away to the West in search of some better resting-place. The land which he discovered pleased him: he left there part of his people, and went back to Wales for a fresh supply of adventurers, with whom he again set sail, and was heard of no more. Strong evidence has been adduced that he reached America, and that his posterity exist there to this day, on the southern branches of the Missouri, retaining their complexion, their language, and, in some degree, their arts.

About the same time, the Aztecas, an American tribe, in consequence of certain calamities, and of a particular omen, forsook Aztlan, their own country, under the guidance of Yuhidthiton. They became a mighty people, and founded the Mexican empire, taking the name of Mexicans, in honour of Mexitli, their tutelary god. Their emigration is here connected with the adventures of Madoc, and their superstition is represented as the same which their descendants practised, when discovered by the Spaniards. The manners of the Poem, in both its parts, will be found historically true. It assumes not the degraded title of Epic: and the question, therefore, is not whether the story is formed upon the rules of Aristotle, but whether it be adapted to the purposes of poetry.

Keswick, 1805.

'Three things must be avoided in Poetry; the frivolous, the obscure, and the superfluous.

'The three excellencies of Poetry; simplicity of language, simplicity of subject, and simplicity of invention.

'The three indispensable purities of Poetry; pure truth, pure language, and pure manners.

'Three things should all Poetry be; thoroughly erudite, thoroughly animated, and thoroughly natural.'—*Triads.*

COME, LISTEN TO A TALE OF TIMES OF OLD!
COME, FOR YE KNOW ME. I AM HE WHO SANG
THE MAID OF ARC, AND I AM HE WHO FRAMED
OF THALABA THE WILD AND WONDROUS SONG.
COME, LISTEN TO MY LAY, AND YE SHALL HEAR
HOW MADOC FROM THE SHORES OF BRITAIN SPREAD
THE ADVENTUROUS SAIL, EXPLORED THE OCEAN PATHS,
AND QUELLED BARBARIAN POWER, AND OVERTHREW
THE BLOODY ALTARS OF IDOLATRY,
AND PLANTED IN ITS FANES TRIUMPHANTLY
THE CROSS OF CHRIST. COME, LISTEN TO MY LAY!

MADOC IN WALES: PART I

I. THE RETURN TO WALES

FAIR blows the wind, . . the vessel drives along,
Her streamers fluttering at their length, her sails
All full, . . she drives along, and round her prow
Scatters the ocean spray. What feelings then
Fill'd every bosom, when the mariners,
After the peril of that weary way,
Beheld their own dear country! Here stands one
Stretching his sight toward the distant shore,
And as to well-known forms his busy joy
Shapes the dim outline, eagerly he points
The fancied headland and the cape and bay,
Till his eyes ache o'erstraining. This man shakes
His comrade's hand and bids him welcome home,
And blesses God, and then he weeps aloud:
Here stands another, who in secret prayer
Calls on the Virgin and his patron Saint,
Renewing his old vows of gifts and alms
And pilgrimage, so he may find all well.
Silent and thoughtful and apart from all
Stood Madoc; now his noble enterprize
Proudly remembering, now in dreams of hope,
Anon of bodings full and doubt and fear.
Fair smiled the evening, and the favouring gale
Sung in the shrouds, and swift the steady bark
Rush'd roaring through the waves.
The sun goes down:
Far off his light is on the naked crags
Of Penmanmawr, and Arvon's ancient hills;
And the last glory lingers yet awhile,
Crowning old Snowdon's venerable head,
That rose amid his mountains. Now the ship
Drew nigh where Mona, the dark island, stretch'd
Her shore along the ocean's lighter line.
There through the mist and twilight, many a fire
Up-flaming stream'd upon the level sea
Red lines of lengthening light, which, far away
Rising and falling, flash'd athwart the waves.
Thereat full many a thought of ill disturb'd
Prince Madoc's mind; . . did some new conqueror seize
The throne of David? had the tyrant's guilt
Awaken'd vengeance to the deed of death?
Or blazed they for a brother's obsequies,
The sport and mirth of murder? . . Like the lights
Which there upon Aberfraw's royal walls
Are waving with the wind, the painful doubt
Fluctuates within him. . . Onward drives the gale, . .

On flies the bark; . . and she hath reach'd at length
Her haven, safe from her unequall'd way!
And now, in louder and yet louder joy
Clamorous, the happy mariners all-hail
Their native shore, and now they leap to land.

There stood an old man on the beach to wait
The comers from the ocean; and he ask'd,
Is it the Prince? And Madoc knew his voice,
And turn'd to him and fell upon his neck;
For it was Urien who had foster'd him,
Had loved him like a child; and Madoc loved,
Even as a father loved he that old man.
My Sister? quoth the Prince. . . Oh, she and I
Have wept together, Madoc, for thy loss, . .
That long and cruel absence! . . She and I,
Hour after hour and day by day, have look'd
Toward the waters, and with aching eyes
And aching heart, sate watching every sail.

And David and our brethren? cried the Prince,
As they moved on. . . But then old Urien's lips
Were slow at answer; and he spake, and paused
In the first breath of utterance, as to choose
Fit words for uttering some unhappy tale.
More blood, quoth Madoc, yet? Hath David's fear
Forced him to still more cruelty? Alas . .
Woe for the house of Owen! Evil stars,
Replied the old man, ruled o'er thy brethren's birth.
From Dolwyddelan driven, his peaceful home,
Poor Yorwerth sought the church's sanctuary;
The murderer follow'd; . . Madoc, need I say
Who sent the sword? . . Llewelyn, his brave boy, [realm,
Where wanders he? in this his rightful
Houseless and hunted; richly would the King
Gift the red hand that rid him of that fear!
Ririd, an outlaw'd fugitive, as yet
Eludes his deadly purpose; Rodri lives,
A prisoner he, . . I know not in what fit
Of natural mercy from the slaughter spared.
Oh, if my dear old master saw the wreck
And scattering of his house! . . that princely race!
The beautiful band of brethren that they were!

Madoc made no reply, . . he closed his eyes,
Groaning. But Urien, for his heart was full,
Loving to linger on the woe, pursued:
I did not think to live to such an hour
Of joy as this! and often, when my sight
Turn'd dizzy from the ocean, overcome
With heavy anguish, Madoc, I have prayed
That God would please to take me to his rest.

So as he ceased his speech, a sudden shout
Of popular joy awakened Madoc's ear;
And calling then to mind the festal fires,
He ask'd their import. The old man replied,
It is the giddy people merry-making
To welcome their new Queen; unheeding they
The shame and the reproach to the long line
Of our old royalty! . . Thy brother weds
The Saxon's sister.
What! . . in loud reply
Madoc exclaim'd, hath he forgotten all?
David! King Owen's son, . . my father's son, . .
He wed the Saxon, . . the Plantagenet!

Quoth Urien, He so doats, as she had dropt
Some philtre in his cup, to lethargize
The British blood that came from Owen's veins.
Three days his halls have echoed to the song
Of joyaunce.
Shame! foul shame! that they should hear
Songs of such joyaunce! cried the indignant Prince:
Oh that my Father's hall, where I have heard
The songs of Corwen and of Keiriog's day,
Should echo this pollution! Will the chiefs
Brook this alliance, this unnatural tie?

There is no face but wears a courtly smile,
Urien replied: Aberfraw's ancient towers
Beheld no pride of festival like this,
No like solemnities, when Owen came
In conquest, and Gowalchmai struck the harp.
Only Goervyl, careless of the pomp,
Sits in her solitude, lamenting thee.

Saw ye not then my banner? quoth the Lord
Of Ocean; on the topmast-head it stood
To tell the tale of triumph; . . or did night
Hide the glad signal, and the joy hath yet
To reach her?
Now had they almost attain'd
The palace portal. Urien stopt and said,
The child should know your coming; it is long
Since she hath heard a voice that to her heart
Spake gladness; . . none but I must tell her this.
So Urien sought Goervyl, whom he found
Alone and gazing on the moonlight sea.

Oh you are welcome, Urien! cried the maid
There was a ship came sailing hitherward . .
I could not see his banner, for the night
Closed in so fast around her; but my heart
Indulged a foolish hope!
The old man replied,
With difficult effort keeping his heart down,
God in his goodness may reserve for us
That blessing yet! I have yet life enow
To trust that I shall live to see the day,
Albeit the number of my years well nigh
Be full.
Ill-judging kindness! said the maid.
Have I not nursed for two long wretched years
That miserable hope, which every day
Grew weaker, like a baby sick to death,
Yet dearer for its weakness day by day!
No, never shall we see his daring bark!
I knew and felt it in the evil hour
When forth she fared! I felt it then! that kiss
Was our death parting! . . And she paused to curb
The agony: anon, . . But thou hast been
To learn their tidings, Urien? . . He replied,
In half-articulate words, . . They said, my child,
That Madoc lived, . . that soon he would be here.

She had received the shock of happiness:
Urien! she cried . . thou art not mocking me!
Nothing the old man spake, but spread his arms
Sobbing aloud. Goervyl from their hold
Started, and sunk upon her brother's breast.

Recovering first, the aged Urien said,
Enough of this, . . there will be time for this,
My children! better it behoves ye now
To seek the King. And, Madoc, I beseech thee,

Bear with thy brother! gently bear with him,
My gentle Prince! he is the headstrong slave
Of passions unsubdued; he feels no tie
Of kindly love, or blood;.. provoke him not,
Madoc!.. It is his nature's malady.

Thou good old man! replied the Prince, be sure
I shall remember what to him is due,
What to myself; for I was in my youth
Wisely and well train'd up; nor yet hath time
Effaced the lore my foster-father taught.

Haste, haste! exclaim'd Goervyl;.. for her heart
Smote her in sudden terror at the thought
Of Yorwerth, and of Owen's broken house;..
I dread his dark suspicions!
Not for me
Suffer that fear, my sister! quoth the Prince.
Safe is the straight and open way I tread;
Nor hath God made the human heart so bad
That thou or I should have a danger there.
So saying, they toward the palace gate
Went on, ere yet Aberfraw had received
The tidings of her wanderer's glad return.

II. THE MARRIAGE FEAST

The guests were seated at the festal board;
Green rushes strew'd the floor; high in the hall
Was David; Emma, in her bridal robe,
In youth, in beauty, by her husband's side
Sate at the marriage feast. The monarch raised
His eyes, he saw the mariner approach;
Madoc! he cried; strong nature's impulses
Prevail'd, and with a holy joy he met
His brother's warm embrace.
With that what peals
Of exultation shook Aberfraw's tower!
How then re-echoing rang the home of Kings,
When from subduëd Ocean, from the World
That he had first foreseen, he first had found,
Came her triumphant child! The mariners,
A happy band, enter the clamorous hall;
Friend greets with friend, and all are friends; one joy
Fills with one common feeling every heart,
And strangers give and take the welcoming
Of hand and voice and eye. That boisterous joy
At length allay'd, the board was spread anew,
Anew the horn was brimm'd, the central hearth
Built up anew for later revelries.
Now to the ready feast! the seneschal
Duly below the pillars ranged the crew;
Toward the guest's most honourable seat
The King himself led his brave brother;.. then,
Eyeing the lovely Saxon as he spake,
Here, Madoc, see thy sister! thou hast been
Long absent, and our house hath felt the while
Sad diminution; but my arm at last
Hath rooted out rebellion from the land;
And I have stablish'd now our ancient house,
Grafting a scyon from the royal tree
Of England on the sceptre; so shall peace
Bless our dear country.
Long and happy years
Await my sovereigns! thus the Prince replied,
And long may our dear country rest in peace!
Enough of sorrow hath our royal house
Known in the field of battles,.. yet we reap'd
The harvest of renown

Ay, . . many a day,
David replied, together have we led
The onset. . . Dost thou not remember, brother,
How in that hot and unexpected charge
On Keiriog's bank, we gave the enemy
Their welcoming ?
And Berwyn's after-strife !
Quoth Madoc, as the memory kindled him :
The fool that day, who in his masque attire
Sported before King Henry, wished in vain
Fitlier habiliments of javelin-proof !
And yet not more precipitate that fool
Dropt his mock weapons, than the archers cast
Desperate their bows and quivers-full away,
When we leapt on, and in the mire and blood
Trampled their banner !
That, exclaimed the King,
That was a day indeed, which I may still
Proudly remember, proved as I have been
In conflicts of such perilous assay,
That Saxon combat seem'd like woman's war.
When with the traitor Hoel I did wage
The deadly battle, then was I in truth
Put to the proof ; no vantage-ground was there,
Nor famine, nor disease, nor storms to aid,
But equal, hard, close battle, man to man,
Briton to Briton. By my soul, pursued
The tyrant, heedless how from Madoc's eye
Flash'd the quick wrath like lightning, . . though I knew
The rebel's worth, his prowess then excited
Unwelcome wonder ; even at the last,
When stiff with toil and faint with wounds, he raised
Feebly his broken sword, . .
Then Madoc's grief
Found utterance ; Wherefore, David, dost thou rouse
The memory now of that unhappy day,
That thou should'st wish to hide from earth and heaven ?
Not in Aberfraw, . . not to me this tale !
Tell it the Saxon ! . . he will join thy triumph, . .
He hates the race of Owen ! . . but I loved
My brother Hoel, . . loved him ? . . that ye knew !
I was to him the dearest of his kin,
And he my own heart's brother.
David's cheek
Grew pale and dark ; he bent his broad black brow
Full upon Madoc's glowing countenance ;
Art thou return'd to brave me ? to my teeth
To praise the rebel bastard ? to insult
The royal Saxon, my affianced friend ?
I hate the Saxon ! Madoc cried ; not yet
Have I forgotten, how from Keiriog's shame
Flying, the coward wreak'd his cruelty
On our poor brethren ! . . David, seest thou never
Those eyeless spectres by thy bridal bed?
Forget that horror ? . . may the fire of God
Blast my right hand, or ever it be link'd
With that accursed Plantagenet's !
The while,
Impatience struggled in the heaving breast
Of David ; every agitated limb
Shook with ungovernable wrath ; the page,
Who chafed his feet, in fear suspends his task ;
In fear the guests gaze on him silently ;
His eyeballs flash'd, strong anger choked his voice,
He started up. . . Him Emma, by the hand
Gently retaining, held, with gentle words
Calming his rage. Goervyl too in tears
Besought her generous brother : he had met
Emma's reproaching glance, and self-reproved,
While the warm blood flush'd deeper o'er his cheek,
Thus he replied ; I pray you pardon me,

My Sister-Queen ! nay, you will learn to love
This high affection for the race of Owen,
Yourself the daughter of his royal house
By better ties than blood.
Grateful the Queen
Replied, by winning smile and eloquent eye
Thanking the gentle Prince: a moment's pause
Ensued; Goervyl then with timely speech
Thus to the wanderer of the waters spake:
Madoc, thou hast not told us of the world
Beyond the ocean and the paths of man.
A lovely land it needs must be, my brother,
Or sure you had not sojourn'd there so long,
Of me forgetful, and my heavy hours
Of grief and solitude and wretched hope.
Where is Cadwallon ? for one bark alone
I saw come sailing here.
The tale you ask
Is long, Goervyl, said the mariner,
And I in truth am weary. Many moons
Have wax'd and waned, since from that distant world,
The country of my dreams and hope and faith,
We spread the homeward sail: a goodly world,
My Sister ! thou wilt see its goodliness,
And greet Cadwallon there. . . But this shall be
To-morrow's tale; . . indulge we now the feast ! . .
You know not with what joy we mariners
Behold a sight like this.
Smiling he spake,
And turning, from the sewer's hand he took
The flowing mead. David, the while, relieved
From rising jealousies, with better eye
Regards his venturous brother. Let the Bard,
Exclaim'd the King, give his accustom'd lay;
For sweet, I know, to Madoc is the song
He loved in earlier years.
Then, strong of voice,
The officer proclaim'd the sovereign will,
Bidding the hall be silent; loud he spake,
And smote the sounding pillar with his wand,
And hush'd the banqueters. The chief of Bards
Then raised the ancient lay.
Thee, Lord ! he sung,
O Father ! Thee, whose wisdom, Thee, whose power,
Whose love, . . all love, all power, all wisdom, Thou !
Tongue cannot utter, nor can heart conceive.
He in the lowest depth of Being framed
The imperishable mind; in every change,
Through the great circle of progressive life,
He guides and guards, till evil shall be known,
And being known as evil, cease to be;
And the pure soul, emancipate by Death,
The Enlarger, shall attain its end predoom'd,
The eternal newness of eternal joy.

He left this lofty theme; he struck the harp
To Owen's praise, swift in the course of wrath,
Father of Heroes. That proud day he sung,
When from green Erin came the insulting host,
Lochlin's long burthens of the flood, and they
Who left their distant homes in evil hour,
The death-doom'd Normen. There was heaviest toil,
There deeper tumult, where the dragon race
Of Mona trampled down the humbled head
Of haughty power; the sword of slaughter carved
Food for the yellow-footed fowl of heaven,

And Menai's waters, burst with plunge on plunge,
Curling above their banks with tempest-swell
Their bloody billows heaved.
The long-past days
Came on the mind of Madoc, as he heard
That song of triumph ; on his sun-burnt brow
Sate exultation : . . other thoughts arose,
As on the fate of all his gallant house
Mournful he mused ; oppressive memory swell'd
His bosom, over his fix'd eye-balls swam
The tear's dim lustre, and the loud-toned harp
Rung on his ear in vain ; . . its silence first
Roused him from dreams of days that were no more.

III. CADWALLON

THEN on the morrow, at the festal board,
The Lord of Ocean thus began his tale.

My heart beat high when with the favouring wind
We sail'd away ; Aberfraw ! when thy towers,
And the huge headland of my mother isle,
Shrunk and were gone.
But, Madoc, I would learn,
Quoth David, how this enterprize arose,
And the wild hope of worlds beyond the sea ;
For, at thine outset, being in the war,
I did not hear from vague and common fame
The moving cause. Sprung it from bardic lore,
The hidden wisdom of the years of old,
Forgotten long ? or did it visit thee
In dreams that come from Heaven ?
The Prince replied,
Thou shalt hear all ; . . but if, amid the tale,
Strictly sincere, I haply should rehearse
Aught to the King ungrateful, let my brother
Be patient with the involuntary fault.

I was the guest of Rhys at Dinevawr,
And there the tidings found me, that our sire
Was gather'd to his fathers: . . not alone
The sorrow came ; the same ill messenger
Told of the strife that shook our royal house,
When Hoel, proud of prowess, seized the throne
Which you, for elder claim and lawful birth,
Challenged in arms. With all a brother's love,
I on the instant hurried to prevent
The impious battle : . . all the day I sped;
Night did not stay me on my eager way . .
Where'er I pass'd, new rumour raised new fear. . .
Midnight, and morn, and noon, I hurried on,
And the late eve was darkening when I reach'd
Arvon, the fatal field. . . The sight, the sounds,
Live in my memory now, . . for all was done !
For horse and horseman, side by side in death,
Lay on the bloody plain ; . . a host of men,
And not one living soul, . . and not one sound,
One human sound ; . . only the raven's wing,
Which rose before my coming, and the neigh
Of wounded horses, wandering o'er the plain.

Night now was coming on ; a man approach'd
And bade me to his dwelling nigh at hand.
Thither I turn'd, too weak to travel more ;
For I was overspent with weariness,
And having now no hope to bear me up,
Trouble and bodily labour master'd me.
I ask'd him of the battle : . . who had fallen
He knew not, nor to whom the lot of war

Had given my father's sceptre. Here, said he,
I came to seek if haply I might find
Some wounded wretch, abandon'd else to death.
My search was vain, the sword of civil war
Had bit too deeply.
Soon we reach'd his home,
A lone and lowly dwelling in the hills,
By a grey mountain stream. Beside the hearth
There sate an old blind man; his head was raised
As he were listening to the coming sounds,
And in the fire-light shone his silver locks.
Father, said he who guided me, I bring
A guest to our poor hospitality;
And then he brought me water from the brook,
And homely fare, and I was satisfied:
That done, he piled the hearth, and spread around
The rushes of repose. I laid me down;
But worn with toil, and full of many fears,
Sleep did not visit me: the quiet sounds
Of nature troubled my distemper'd sense;
My ear was busy with the stirring gale,
The moving leaves, the brook's perpetual flow.

So on the morrow languidly I rose,
And faint with fever: but a restless wish
Was working in me, and I said, My host,
Wilt thou go with me to the battle-field,
That I may search the slain? for in the fray
My brethren fought; and though with all my speed
I strove to reach them ere the strife began,
Alas, I sped too slow!
Grievest thou for that?
He answer'd, grievest thou that thou art spared
The shame and guilt of that unhappy strife,
Briton with Briton in unnatural war?
Nay, I replied, mistake me not! I came
To reconcile the chiefs; they might have heard
Their brother's voice.
Their brother's voice? said he,
Was it not so? . . And thou, too, art the son
Of Owen! . . Yesternight I did not know
The cause there is to pity thee. Alas,
Two brethren thou wilt lose when one shall fall! . .
Lament not him whom death may save from guilt;
For all too surely in the conqueror
Thou wilt find one whom his own fears henceforth
Must make to all his kin a perilous foe.

I felt as though he wrong'd my father's sons,
And raised an angry eye, and answer'd him, . .
My brethren love me.
Then the old man cried,
Oh what is Princes' love? what are the ties
Of blood, the affections growing as we grow,
If but ambition come? . . Thou deemest sure
Thy brethren love thee; . . ye have play'd together
In childhood, shared your riper hopes and fears,
Fought side by side in battle: . . they may be
Brave, generous, all that once their father was,
Whom ye, I ween, call virtuous.
At the name,
With pious warmth, I cried, Yes, he was good,
And great, and glorious! Gwyneth's ancient annals
Boast not a name more noble. In the war
Fearless he was, . . the Saxon found him so;
Wise was his counsel, and no supplicant
For justice ever from his palace-gate
Unrighted turn'd away. King Owen's name
Shall live to after times without a blot!

There were two brethren once of kingly line,
The old man replied; they loved each other well,
And when the one was at his dying hour,
It then was comfort to him that he left
So dear a brother, who would duly pay
A father's duties to his orphan boy.
And sure he loved the orphan, and the boy
With all a child's sincerity loved him,
And learnt to call him father: so the years
Went on, till when the orphan gain'd the age
Of manhood, to the throne his uncle came.
The young man claim'd a fair inheritance,
His father's lands; and . . mark what follows, Prince!
At midnight he was seized, and to his eyes
The brazen plate was held. . . He cried aloud,
He look'd around for help, . . he only saw
His Uncle's ministers, prepared to do
Their wicked work, who to the red hot brass
Forced his poor eyes, and held the open lids,
Till the long agony consumed the sense;
And when their hold relax'd, it had been worth
The wealth of worlds if he could then have seen,
Dreadful to him and hideous as they were,
Their ruffian faces! . . I am blind, young Prince,
And I can tell how sweet a thing it is
To see the blessed light!
Must more be told?
What farther agonies he yet endured?
Or hast thou known the consummated crime,
And heard Cynetha's fate?
A painful glow
Inflamed my cheek, and for my father's crime
I felt the shame of guilt. The dark-brow'd man
Beheld the burning flush, the uneasy eye,
That knew not where to rest. Come! we will search
The slain! arising from his seat, he said.
I follow'd; to the field of fight we went,
And over steeds and arms and men we held
Our way in silence. Here it was, quoth he,
The fiercest war was waged; lo! in what heaps
Man upon man fell slaughter'd! Then my heart
Smote me, and my knees shook; for I beheld
Where, on his conquer'd foemen, Hoel lay.

He paused, his heart was full, and on his tongue
The imperfect utterance died; a general gloom
Sadden'd the hall, and David's cheek grew pale.
Commanding first his feelings, Madoc broke
The oppressive silence.
Then Cadwallon took
My hand, and, pointing to his dwelling, cried,
Prince, go and rest thee there, for thou hast need
Of rest; . . the care of sepulture be mine.
Nor did I then comply, refusing rest,
Till I had seen in holy ground inearth'd
My poor lost brother. Wherefore, he exclaim'd,
(And I was awed by his severer eye)
Wouldst thou be pampering thy distempered mind?
Affliction is not sent in vain, young man,
From that good God, who chastens whom he loves.
Oh! there is healing in the bitter cup!
Go yonder, and before the unerring will
Bow, and have comfort! To the hut I went,
And there beside the lonely mountain-stream,
I veil'd my head, and brooded on the past.

He tarried long; I felt the hours pass by,
As in a dream of morning, when the mind,
Half to reality awaken'd, blends
With airy visions and vague phantasies
Her dim perception; till at length his step
Aroused me, and he came. I question'd him,
Where is the body? hast thou bade the priests
Perform due masses for his soul's repose?

He answer'd me, The rain and dew of heaven
Will fall upon the turf that covers him,
And greener grass will flourish on his grave.
But rouse thee, Prince! there will be hours enough
For mournful memory; . . it befits thee now
Take counsel for thyself: . . the son of Owen
Lives not in safety here.
I bow'd my head
Opprest by heavy thoughts: all wretchedness
The present; darkness on the future lay;
Fearful and gloomy both. I answer'd not.

Hath power seduced thy wishes? he pursued,
And wouldst thou seize upon thy father's throne?
Now God forbid! quoth I. Now God forbid!
Quoth he; . . but thou art dangerous, Prince! and what
Shall shield thee from the jealous arm of power?
Think of Cynetha! . . the unsleeping eye
Of justice hath not closed upon his wrongs;
At length the avenging arm is gone abroad,
One woe is past, . . woe after woe comes on, . .
There is no safety here, . . here thou must be
The victim or the murderer! Does thy heart
Shrink from the alternative? . . look round! . . behold
What shelter, . . whither wouldst thou fly for peace?
What if the asylum of the Church were safe, . .
Were there no better purposes ordain'd
For that young arm, that heart of noble hopes?
Son of our kings, . . of old Cassibelan,
Great Caratach, immortal Arthur's line,
Oh, shall the blood of that heroic race
Stagnate in cloister-sloth? . . Or wouldst thou leave
Thy native isle, and beg in awkward phrase
Some foreign sovereign's charitable grace, . .
The Saxon or the Frank, . . and earn his gold,
The hireling in a war whose cause thou know'st not,
Whose end concerns not thee?
I sate and gazed,
Following his eye with wonder, as he paced
Before me to and fro, and listening still,
Though now he paced in silence. But anon,
The old man's voice and step awakened us
Each from his thought; I will come out, said he,
That I may sit beside the brook, and feel
The comfortable sun. As forth he came,
I could not choose but look upon his face:
Gently on him had gentle nature laid
The weight of years; all passions that disturb
Were pass'd away; the stronger lines of grief
Soften'd and settled, till they told of grief
By patient hope and piety subdued:
His eyes, which had their hue and brightness left,
Fix'd lifelessly, or objectless they roll'd,
Nor moved by sense, nor animate with thought.

On a smooth stone beside the stream he took
His wonted seat in the sunshine. Thou hast lost
A brother, Prince, he said . . or the dull ear
Of age deceived me. Peace be with his soul!
And may the curse that lies upon the house
Of Owen turn away! Wilt thou come hither,
And let me feel thy face? . . I wondered at him:
Yet while his hand perused my lineaments
Deep awe and reverence fill'd me. O my God,
Bless this young man! he cried; a perilous state
Is his; . . but let not thou his father's sins
Be visited on him!
I raised my eyes
Enquiring, to Cadwallon; Nay, young Prince,
Despise not thou the blind man's prayer! he cried;
It might have given thy father's dying hour
A hope, that sure he needed . . for, know thou,
It is the victim of thy father's crime,
Who asks a blessing on thee!
At his feet
I fell, and clasp'd his knees: he raised me up; . .
Blind as I was, a mutilated wretch,
A thing that nature owns not, I survived,
Loathing existence, and with impious voice
Accused the will of heaven, and groan'd for death.
Years pass'd away; this universal blank
Became familiar, and my soul reposed
On God, and I had comfort in my prayers.
But there were blessings for me yet in store.
Thy father knew not, when his bloody fear
All hope of an avenger had cut off,
How there existed then an unborn babe,
Child of my lawless love. Year after year
I lived a lonely and forgotten wretch,
Before Cadwallon knew his father's fate,
Long years and years before I knew my son;
For never, till his mother's dying hour,
Learnt he his dangerous birth. He sought me then;
He woke my soul once more to human ties; . .
I hope he hath not wean'd my heart from heaven,
Life is so precious now! . .
Dear good old man!
And lives he still? Goervyl ask'd, in tears;
Madoc replied, I scarce can hope to find
A father's welcome at my distant home.
I left him full of days, and ripe for death;
And the last prayer Cynetha breathed upon me
Went like a death-bed blessing to my heart!

When evening came, toward the echoing shore
I and Cadwallon walk'd together forth:
Bright with dilated glory shone the west;
But brighter lay the ocean-flood below,
The burnish'd silver sea, that heaved and flash'd
Its restless rays, intolerably bright.
Prince, quoth Cadwallon, thou hast rode the waves
In triumph, when the invaders felt thine arm.
Oh what a nobler conquest might be won,
There, . . upon that wide field! . . What meanest thou?
I cried. . . That yonder waters are not spread
A boundless waste, a bourne impassable! . .
That man should rule the Elements! . . that there
Might manly courage, manly wisdom find
Some happy isle, some undiscovered shore,
Some resting place for peace. . . Oh that my soul

Could seize the wings of Morning! soon would I
Behold that other world, where yonder sun
Speeds now, to dawn in glory!
As he spake,
Conviction came upon my startled mind,
Like lightning on the midnight traveller.
I caught his hand; . . Kinsman and guide and friend,
Yea, let us go together! . . Down we sate,
Full of the vision on the echoing shore;
One only object fill'd ear, eye, and thought:
We gazed upon the aweful world of waves,
And talk'd and dreamt of years that were to come.

IV. THE VOYAGE

Not with a heart unmoved I left thy shores,
Dear native isle! oh . . not without a pang,
As thy fair uplands lessen'd on the view,
Cast back the long involuntary look!
The morning cheer'd our outset; gentle airs
Curl'd the blue deep, and bright the summer sun
Play'd o'er the summer ocean, when our barks
Began their way.
And they were gallant barks,
As ever through the raging billows rode;
And many a tempest's buffeting they bore.
Their sails all swelling with the eastern breeze,
Their tighten'd cordage clattering to the mast,
Steady they rode the main: the gale aloft
Sung in the shrouds, the sparkling waters hiss'd
Before, and froth'd and whiten'd far behind.
Day after day, with one auspicious wind,
Right to the setting sun we held our course.
My hope had kindled every heart; they blest
The unvarying breeze, whose unabating strength
Still sped us onward; and they said that Heaven
Favour'd the bold emprize.
How many a time,
Mounting the mast-tower-top, with eager ken
They gazed, and fancied in the distant sky
Their promised shore, beneath the evening cloud,
Or seen, low lying, through the haze of morn.
I too with eyes as anxious watch'd the waves,
Though patient, and prepared for long delay;
For not on wild adventure had I rush'd
With giddy speed, in some delirious fit
Of fancy; but in many a tranquil hour
Weigh'd well the attempt, till hope matured to faith.
Day after day, day after day the same, . .
A weary waste of waters! still the breeze
Hung heavy in our sails, and we held on
One even course: a second week was gone,
And now another past, and still the same,
Waves beyond waves, the interminable sea!
What marvel, if at length the mariners
Grew sick with long expectance? I beheld
Dark looks of growing restlessness, I heard
Distrust's low murmurings; nor avail'd it long
To see and not perceive. Shame had awhile
Represt their fear, till like a smother'd fire
It burst, and spread with quick contagion round,
And strengthen'd as it spread. They spake in tones
Which might not be mistaken; . . They had done
What men dared do, ventured where never keel

Had cut the deep before: still all was sea,
The same unbounded ocean! . . to proceed
Were tempting heaven.
I heard with feign'd surprise,
And, pointing then to where our fellow bark,
Gay with her fluttering streamers and full sails,
Rode, as in triumph, o'er the element,
I ask'd them what their comrades there would deem
Of those so bold ashore, who, when a day,
Perchance an hour, might crown their glorious toil,
Shrunk then, and coward-like return'd to meet
Mockery and shame? True, they had ventured on
In seas unknown, beyond where ever man
Had plough'd the billows yet: more reason so
Why they should now, like him whose happy speed
Well nigh hath run the race, with higher hope
Press onward to the prize. But late they said,
Marking the favour of the steady gale,
That Heaven was with us; Heaven vouchsafed us still
Fair seas and favouring skies: nor need we pray
For other aid, the rest was in ourselves;
Nature had given it, when she gave to man
Courage and constancy.
They answer'd not,
Awhile obedient; but I saw with dread
The silent sullenness of cold assent.
Then, with what fearful eagerness I gazed
At earliest daybreak, o'er the distant deep!
How sick at heart with hope, when evening closed,
Gazed through the gathering shadows! . . but I saw
The sun still sink below the endless waves,
And still at morn, beneath the farthest sky,
Unbounded ocean heaved. Day after day
Before the steady gale we drove along, . .
Day after day! The fourth week now had pass'd;
Still all around was sea, . . the eternal sea!
So long that we had voyaged on so fast,
And still at morning where we were at night,
And where we were at morn, at nightfall still,
The centre of that drear circumference,
Progressive, yet no change! . . almost it seem'd
That we had pass'd the mortal bounds of space,
And speed was toiling in infinity.
My days were days of fear, my hours of rest
Were like a tyrant's slumber. Sullen looks,
Eyes turn'd on me, and whispers meant to meet
My ear, and loud despondency, and talk
Of home, now never to be seen again, . .
I suffer'd these, dissembling as I could,
Till that avail'd no longer. Resolute
The men came round me: They had shown enough
Of courage now, enough of constancy;
Still to pursue the desperate enterprize
Were impious madness! they had deem'd, indeed,
That Heaven in favour gave the unchanging gale; . .
More reason now to think offended God,
When man's presumptuous folly strove to pass
The fated limits of the world, had sent
His winds, to waft us to the death we sought.
Their lives were dear, they bade me know, and they
Many, and I, the obstinate, but one.
With that, attending no reply, they hail'd
Our fellow bark, and told their fix'd resolve.
A shout of joy approved. Thus, desperate now,

I sought my solitary cabin: there
Confused with vague tumultuous feelings lay,
And to remembrance and reflection lost,
Knew only I was wretched.
Thus entranced
Cadwallon found me; shame, and grief, and pride,
And baffled hope, and fruitless anger swell'd
Within me. All is over! I exclaim'd;
Yet not in me, my friend, hath time produced
These tardy doubts and shameful fickleness;
I have not fail'd, Cadwallon! Nay, he said,
The coward fears which persecuted me
Have shown what thou hast suffer'd. We have yet
One hope . . I pray'd them to proceed a day, . .
But one day more; . . this little have I gain'd,
And here will wait the issue; in yon bark
I am not needed, . . they are masters there.

One only day! . . The gale blew strong, the bark
Sped through the waters; but the silent hours,
Who make no pause, went by; and center'd still,
We saw the dreary vacancy of heaven
Close round our narrow view, when that brief term,
The last poor respite of our hopes, expired.
They shorten'd sail, and call'd with coward prayer
For homeward winds. Why, what poor slaves are we,
In bitterness I cried; the sport of chance;
Left to the mercy of the elements,
Or the more wayward will of such as these,
Blind tools and victims of their destiny!
Yea, Madoc! he replied, the Elements
Master indeed the feeble powers of man!
Not to the shores of Cambria will thy ships
Win back their shameful way! . . or He, whose will
Unchains the winds, hath bade them minister
To aid us, when all human hope was gone,
Or we shall soon eternally repose
From life's long voyage.
As he spake, I saw
The clouds hang thick and heavy o'er the deep,
And heavily, upon the long slow swell,
The vessel labour'd on the labouring sea.
The reef-points rattled on the shivering sail;
At fits the sudden gust howl'd ominous,
Anon with unremitting fury raged;
High roll'd the mighty billows, and the blast
Swept from their sheeted sides the showery foam.
Vain now were all the seamen's homeward hopes,
Vain all their skill! . . we drove before the storm.

'Tis pleasant, by the cheerful hearth, to hear
Of tempests and the dangers of the deep,
And pause at times, and feel that we are safe;
Then listen to the perilous tale again,
And with an eager and suspended soul,
Woo terror to delight us. . . But to hear
The roaring of the raging elements, . .
To know all human skill, all human strength,
Avail not, . . to look round, and only see
The mountain wave incumbent with its weight
Of bursting waters o'er the reeling bark, . .
O God, this is indeed a dreadful thing!
And he who hath endured the horror once
Of such an hour, doth never hear the storm
Howl round his home, but he remembers it,
And thinks upon the suffering mariner.

Onward we drove: with unabating force
The tempest raged; night added to the storm

New horrors, and the morn arose o'erspread
With heavier clouds. The weary mariners
Call'd on Saint Cyric's aid; and I too placed
My hope on Heaven, relaxing not the while
Our human efforts. Ye who dwell at home,
Ye do not know the terrors of the main!
When the winds blow, ye walk along the shore,
And as the curling billows leap and toss,
Fable that Ocean's mermaid Shepherdess
Drives her white flocks afield, and warns in time [warn'd
The wary fisherman. Gwenhidwy
When we had no retreat! My secret heart
Almost had fail'd me. . . Were the Elements
Confounded in perpetual conflict here,
Sea, Air, and Heaven? Or were we perishing,
Where at their source the Floods, for ever thus,
Beneath the nearer influence of the moon,
Labour'd in these mad workings? Did the Waters
Here on their outmost circle meet the void,
The verge and brink of Chaos? Or this Earth, . .
Was it indeed a living thing, . . its breath
The ebb and flow of Ocean? and had we
Reach'd the storm rampart of its Sanctuary,
The insuperable boundary, raised to guard
Its mysteries from the eye of man profane?

Three dreadful nights and days we drove along;
The fourth the welcome rain came rattling down,
The wind had fallen, and through the broken cloud
Appeared the bright dilating blue of heaven.
Emboldened now, I call'd the mariners: . .
Vain were it should we bend a homeward course,
Driven by the storm so far; they saw our barks,
For service of that long and perilous way
Disabled, and our food belike to fail.
Silent they heard, reluctant in assent;
Anon, they shouted joyfully, . . I look'd
And saw a bird slow sailing overhead,
His long white pinions by the sunbeam edged
As though with burnish'd silver; . . never yet
Heard I so sweet a music as his cry!

Yet three days more, and hope more eager now,
Sure of the signs of land, . . weed-shoals, and birds
Who flock'd the main, and gentle airs which breathed,
Or seem'd to breathe, fresh fragrance from the shore,
On the last evening, a long shadowy line
Skirted the sea; . . how fast the night closed in!
I stood upon the deck, and watch'd till dawn.
But who can tell what feelings fill'd my heart,
When like a cloud the distant land arose
Grey from the ocean, . . when we left the ship,
And cleft, with rapid oars, the shallow wave,
And stood triumphant on another world!

V. LINCOYA

Madoc had paused awhile; but every eye
Still watch'd his lips, and every voice was hush'd.
Soon as I leapt ashore, pursues the Lord
Of Ocean, prostrate on my face I fell,
Kiss'd the dear earth, and pray'd with thankful tears.
Hard by a brook was flowing; . . never yet,
Even from the gold-tipt horn of victory
With harp and song amid my father's hall,

Pledged I so sweet a draught, as lying there,
Beside that streamlet's brink ! . . to feel the ground,
To quaff the cool clear water, to inhale
The breeze of land, while fears and dangers past
Recurr'd and heighten'd joy, as summer storms
Make the fresh evening lovelier ! To the shore
The natives throng'd; astonish'd, they beheld
Our winged barks, and gazed with wonderment
On the strange garb, the bearded countenance
And the white skin, in all unlike themselves.
I see with what enquiring eyes you ask
What men were they ? Of dark-brown colour, tinged
With sunny redness; wild of eye; their brows
So smooth, as never yet anxiety
Nor busy thought had made a furrow there;
Beardless, and each to each of lineaments
So like, they seem'd but one great family,
Their loins were loosely cinctured, all beside
Bare to the sun and wind; and thus their limbs
Unmanacled display'd the truest forms
Of strength and beauty. Fearless sure they were,
And while they eyed us grasp'd their spears, as if,
Like Britain's injured but unconquer'd sons,
They too had known how perilous it was
To let a stranger, if he came in arms,
Set foot upon their land. But soon the guise
Of men nor purporting nor fearing ill,
Gain'd confidence; their wild distrustful looks
Assumed a milder meaning; over one
I cast my mantle, on another's head
The velvet bonnet placed, and all was joy.
We now besought for food; at once they read
Our gestures, but I cast a hopeless eye
On hills and thickets, woods, and marshy plains,
A waste of rank luxuriance all around.
Thus musing to a lake I follow'd them,
Left when the rivers to their summer course
Withdrew; they scatter'd on its water drugs
Of such strange potency, that soon the shoals
Coop'd there by Nature prodigally kind,
Floated inebriate. As I gazed, a deer
Sprung from the bordering thicket; the true shaft
Scarce with the distant victim's blood had stain'd
Its point, when instantly he dropt and died,
Such deadly juice imbued it; yet on this
We made our meal unharm'd; and I perceived
The wisest leech that ever in our world
Cull'd herbs of hidden virtue, was to these
A child in knowledge. Sorrowing we beheld
The night come on; but soon did night display
More wonders than it veil'd: innumerous tribes
From the wood-cover swarm'd, and darkness made
Their beauties visible; one while they stream'd
A bright blue radiance upon flowers which closed
Their gorgeous colours from the eye of day;
Now motionless and dark eluded search,
Self-shrouded; and anon starring the sky
Rose like a shower of fire. Our friendly hosts
Now led us to the hut, our that night's home,
A rude and spacious dwelling: twisted boughs,
And canes and withies formed the walls and roof;

And from the unhewn trunks which pillar'd it,
Low nets of interwoven reeds were hung.
With shouts of honour here they gather'd round me,
Ungarmented my limbs, and in a net
With softest feathers lined, a pleasant couch,
They laid and left me.
To our ships return'd,
After soft sojourn here we coasted on,
Insatiate of the wonders and the charms
Of earth and air and sea. Thy summer woods
Are lovely, O my mother isle! the birch
Light bending on thy banks, thy elmy vales,
Thy venerable oaks! . . But there, what forms
Of beauty clothed the inlands and the shore!
All these in stateliest growth, and mixt with these
Dark spreading cedar, and the cypress tall,
Its pointed summit waving to the wind
Like a long beacon flame; and loveliest
Amid a thousand strange and lovely shapes,
The lofty palm, that with its nuts supplied
Beverage and food; they edged the shore and crown'd
The far-off highland summits, their straight stems
Bare without leaf or bough, erect and smooth,
Their tresses nodding like a crested helm,
The plumage of the grove.
Will ye believe
The wonders of the ocean? how its shoals
Sprang from the wave, like flashing light, . . took wing,
And twinkling with a silver glitterance,
Flew through the air and sunshine? yet were these
To sight less wondrous than the tribe who swam,
Following like fowlers with uplifted eye
Their falling quarry: . . language cannot paint
Their splendid tints; though in blue ocean seen,
Blue, darkly, deeply, beautifully blue,
In all its rich variety of shades,
Suffused with glowing gold.
Heaven too had there
Its wonders: . . from a deep, black, heavy cloud,
What shall I say? . . a shoot, . . a trunk, . . an arm
Came down: . . yea! like a Demon's arm, it seized
The waters, Ocean smoked beneath its touch,
And rose like dust before the whirlwind's force.
But we sail'd onward over tranquil seas,
Wafted by airs so exquisitely mild,
That even to breathe became an act of will
And sense and pleasure. Not a cloud by day
With purple islanded the dark-blue deep;
By night the quiet billows heaved and glanced
Under the moon, . . that heavenly Moon! so bright,
That many a midnight have I paced the deck,
Forgetful of the hours of due repose
Yea till the Sun in his full majesty
Went forth, like God beholding his own works.

Once when a chief was feasting us on shore,
A captive served the food: I mark'd the youth,
For he had features of a gentler race;
And oftentimes his eye was fix'd on me,
With looks of more than wonder. We return'd
At evening to our ships; at night a voice
Came from the sea, the intelligible voice
Of earnest supplication; he had swum
To trust our mercy; up the side he sprang,
And look'd among the crew, and singling me
Fell at my feet. Such friendly tokenings

As our short commerce with the native tribes
Had taught, I proffer'd, and sincerity
Gave force and meaning to the half-learnt forms.
For one we needed who might speak for us;
And well I liked the youth,—the open lines
Which character'd his face, the fearless heart,
Which gave at once and won full confidence.
So that night at my feet Lincoya slept.

When I display'd whate'er might gratify,
Whate'er surprise, with most delight he view'd
Our arms, the iron helm, the pliant mail,
The buckler strong to save; and then he shook
The lance, and grasp'd the sword, and turn'd to me
With vehement words and gestures, every limb
Working with one strong passion; and he placed
The falchion in my hand, and gave the shield,
And pointed south and west, that I should go
To conquer and protect; anon he wept
Aloud, and clasp'd my knees, and falling fain
He would have kiss'd my feet. Went we to shore?
Then would he labour restlessly to show
A better place lay onward; and in the sand,
To south and west he drew the line of coast,
And figured how a mighty river there
Ran to the sea. The land bent westward soon,
And thus confirm'd we voyaged on to seek
The river inlet, following at the will
Of our new friend: and we learnt after him,
Well pleased and proud to teach, what this was call'd,
What that, with no unprofitable pains.
Nor light the joy I felt at hearing first
The pleasant accents of my native tongue,
Albeit in broken words and tones uncouth,
Come from these foreign lips.
At length we came
Where the great river, amid shoals and banks
And islands, growth of its own gathering spoils,
Through many a branching channel, wide and full,
Rush'd to the main. The gale was strong; and safe,
Amid the uproar of conflicting tides,
Our gallant vessels rode. A stream as broad
And turbid, when it leaves the Land of Hills,
Old Severn rolls; but banks so fair as these
Old Severn views not in his Land of Hills,
Nor even where his turbid waters swell
And sully the salt sea.
So we sail'd on
By shores now cover'd with impervious woods,
Now stretching wide and low, a reedy waste,
And now through vales where earth profusely pour'd
Her treasures, gather'd from the first of days.
Sometimes a savage tribe would welcome us,
By wonder from their lethargy of life
Awaken'd; then again we voyaged on
Through tracts all desolate, for days and days,
League after league, one green and fertile mead,
That fed a thousand herds.
A different scene
Rose on our view, of mount on mountain piled,
Which when I see again in memory,
Star-gazing Idris's stupendous seat
Seems dwarf'd, and Snowdon with its eagle haunts
Shrinks, and is dwindled like a Saxon hill.

Here with Cadwallon and a chosen band,
I left the ships. Lincoya guided us
A toilsome way among the heights; at dusk
We reach'd the village skirts; he bade us halt,
And raised his voice; the elders of the land
Came forth, and led us to an ample hut,
Which in the centre of their dwellings stood,
The Stranger's House. They eyed us wondering,
Yet not for wonder ceased they to observe
Their hospitable rites; from hut to hut
The tidings ran that strangers were arrived,
Fatigued and hungry and athirst; anon,
Each from his means supplying us, came food
And beverage such as cheers the weary man.

VI. ERILLYAB

At morning their high-priest Ayayaca
Came with our guide: the venerable man
With reverential awe accosted us,
For we, he ween'd, were children of a race
Mightier than they, and wiser, and by heaven
Beloved and favour'd more: he came to give
Fit welcome, and he led us to the Queen.
The fate of war had reft her of her realm;
Yet with affection and habitual awe,
And old remembrances, which gave their love
A deeper and religious character,
Fallen as she was, and humbled as they were,
Her faithful people still in all they could
Obey'd Erillyab. She too in her mind
Those recollections cherish'd, and such thoughts
As, though no hope allay'd their bitterness,
Gave to her eye a spirit and a strength,
And pride to features which belike had borne,
Had they been fashion'd by a happier fate,
Meaning more gentle and more womanly,
Yet not more worthy of esteem and love.
She sate upon the threshold of her hut;
For in the palace where her sires had reign'd
The conqueror dwelt. Her son was at her side,
A boy now near to manhood; by the door,
Bare of its bark, the head and branches shorn,
Stood a young tree with many a weapon hung,
Her husband's war-pole, and his monument.
There had his quiver moulder'd, his stone-axe
Had there grown green with moss, his bow-string there
Sung as it cut the wind.
She welcom'd us
With a proud sorrow in her mien; fresh fruits
Were spread before us, and her gestures said
That when he lived whose hand was wont to wield
Those weapons, . . that in better days, . . that ere
She let the tresses of her widowhood
Grow wild, she could have given to guests like us
A worthier welcome. Soon a man approach'd,
Hooded with sable, his half-naked limbs
Smear'd black; the people at his sight drew round,
The women wail'd and wept, the children turn'd
And hid their faces on their mothers' knees.
He to the Queen addrest his speech, then look'd
Around the children, and laid hands on two,
Of different sexes but of age alike
Some six years each, who at his touch shriek'd out.
But then Lincoya rose, and to my feet

Led them, and told me that the conquerors claim'd
These innocents for tribute; that the Priest
Would lay them on the altar of his god,
Pluck out their little hearts in sacrifice,
And with his brotherhood in impious rites
Feast on their flesh! . . I shudder'd, and my hand
Instinctively unsheathed the avenging sword,
As he with passionate and eloquent signs,
Eye-speaking earnestness and quivering lips,
Besought me to preserve himself, and those
Who now fell suppliant round me, . . youths and maids,
Grey-headed men, and mothers with their babes.

I caught the little victims up, I kiss'd
Their innocent cheeks, I raised my eyes to heaven,
I call'd upon Almighty God to hear
And bless the vow I made; in our own tongue
Was that sworn promise of protection pledged . .
Impetuous feeling made no pause for thought.
Heaven heard the vow; the suppliant multitude
Saw what was stirring in my heart; the Priest,
With eye inflamed and rapid answer, raised
His menacing hand; the tone, the bitter smile,
Interpreting his threat.
Meanwhile the Queen,
With watchful eye and steady countenance,
Had listen'd; now she rose and to the Priest
Address'd her speech. Low was her voice and calm,
As one who spake with effort to subdue
Sorrow that struggled still; but while she spake
Her features kindled to more majesty,
Her eye became more animate, her voice
Rose to the height of feeling; on her son
She call'd, and from her husband's monument
His battle-axe she took; and I could see
That when she gave the boy his father's arms,
She call'd his father's spirit to look on
And bless them to his vengeance.
Silently
The tribe stood listening as Erillyab spake.
The very Priest was awed: once he essayed
To answer; his tongue fail'd him, and his lip
Grew pale and fell. He to his countrymen
Of rage and shame and wonder full, return'd,
Bearing no victims for their shrines accurst,
But tidings that the Hoamen had cast off
Their vassalage, roused to desperate revolt
By men in hue and speech and garment strange,
Who in their folly dared defy the power
Of Aztlan.
When the King of Aztlan heard
The unlook'd-for tale, ere yet he roused his strength,
Or pitying our rash valour, or perhaps
Curious to see the man so bravely rash,
He sent to bid me to his court. Surprised,
I should have given to him no credulous faith,
But fearlessly Erillyab bade me trust
Her honourable foe. Unarm'd I went,
Lincoya with me to exchange our speech
So as he could, of safety first assured;
For to their devilish idols he had been
A victim doom'd, and from the bloody rites
Flying been carried captive far away.

From early morning till the midnoon hour
We travell'd in the mountains; then a plain
Open'd below, and rose upon the sight,

Like boundless ocean from a hill-top seen.
A beautiful and populous plain it was;
Fair woods were there and fertilizing streams,
And pastures spreading wide, and villages
In fruitful groves embower'd, and stately towns,
And many a single dwelling specking it,
As though for many a year the land had been
The land of peace. Below us, where the base
Of the great mountain to the level sloped,
A broad blue lake extended far and wide
Its waters, dark beneath the light of noon.
There Aztlan stood upon the farther shore:
Amid the shade of trees its dwellings rose,
Their level roofs with turrets set around,
And battlements all burnish'd white, which shone
Like silver in the sunshine. I beheld
The imperial city, her far-circling walls,
Her garden groves and stately palaces,
Her temple's mountain-size, her thousand roofs;
And when I saw her might and majesty
My mind misgave me then.
We reach'd the shore:
A floating islet waited for me there,
The beautiful work of man. I set my feet
Upon green-growing herbs and flowers, and sate
Embower'd in odorous shrubs: four long light boats
Yoked to the garden, with accordant song,
And dip and dash of oar in harmony,
Bore me across the lake.
Then in a car
Aloft by human bearers was I borne;
And through the city gate, and through long lines
Of marshall'd multitudes who throng'd the way,
We reach'd the palace court. Four priests were there;
Each held a burning censer in his hand,
And strew'd the precious gum as I drew nigh,
And held the steaming fragrance forth to me,
Honouring me like a god. They led me in,
Where on his throne the royal Azteca
Coanocotzin sate. Stranger, said he,
Welcome; and be this coming to thy weal!
A desperate warfare doth thy courage court;
But thou shalt see the people and the power
Whom thy deluded zeal would call to arms;
So may the knowledge make thee timely wise.
The valiant love the valiant. . . Come with me!
So saying he rose; we went together forth
To the Great Temple. 'Twas a huge square hill,
Or rather like a rock it seem'd, hewn out
And squared by patient labour. Never yet
Did our forefathers, o'er beloved chief
Fallen in his glory, heap a monument
Of that prodigious bulk, though every shield
Was laden for his grave, and every hand
Toil'd unremitting at the willing work
From morn till eve, all the long summer day.

The ascent was lengthened with provoking art,
By steps which led but to a wearying path
Round the whole structure; then another flight,
Another road around, and thus a third,
And yet a fourth, before we reach'd the height.
Lo, now, Coanocotzin cried, thou seest
The cities of this widely peopled plain;
And wert thou on yon farthest temple-top,
Yet as far onward wouldst thou see the land
Well husbanded like this, and full of [men.

They tell me that two floating palaces
Brought thee and all thy people; . . when I sound
The Tambour of the God, ten Cities hear
Its voice, and answer to the call in arms.

In truth I felt my weakness, and the view
Had wakened no unreasonable fear,
But that a nearer sight had stirr'd my blood;
For on the summit where we stood four Towers
Were piled with human skulls, and all around
Long files of human heads were strung to parch
And whiten in the sun. What then I felt
Was more than natural courage . . 'twas a trust
In more than mortal strength . . a faith in God, . .
Yea, inspiration from Him! . . I exclaim'd,
Not though ten Cities ten times told obey'd
The King of Aztlan's bidding, should I fear
The power of man!
Art thou then more than man?
He answered; and I saw his tawny cheek
Lose its life-colour as the fear arose;
Nor did I undeceive him from that fear,
For sooth I knew not how to answer him,
And therefore let it work. So not a word
Spake he, till we again had reach'd the court,
And I too went in silent thoughtfulness:
But then when, save Lincoya, there was none
To hear our speech, again did he renew
The query . . Stranger! art thou more than man,
That thou shouldst set the power of man at nought?

Then I replied, Two floating palaces
Bore me and all my people o'er the seas.
When we departed from our mother-land,
The Moon was newly born; we saw her wax
And wane, and witnessed her new birth again;
And all that while, alike by day and night,
We travell'd through the sea, and caught the winds,
And made them bear us forward. We must meet
In battle, if the Hoamen are not freed
From your accursed tribute, . . thou and I,
My people and thy countless multitudes.
Your arrows shall fall from us as the hail
Leaps on a rock, . . and when ye smite with swords,
Not blood but fire shall follow from the stroke.
Yet think not thou that we are more than men!
Our knowledge is our power, and God our strength,
God, whose almighty will created thee,
And me, and all that hath the breath of life.
He is our strength; . . for in His name I speak, . .
And when I tell thee that thou shalt not shed
The life of man in bloody sacrifice,
It is His holy bidding which I speak:
And if thou wilt not listen and obey,
When I shall meet thee in the battle-field,
It is His holy cause for which I fight,
And I shall have His power to vanquish thee!

And thinkest thou our Gods are feeble? cried
The King of Aztlan; thinkest thou they lack
Power to defend their altars, and to keep
The kingdom which they gave us strength to win?
The Gods of thirty nations have opposed
Their irresistible might, and they lie now
Conquer'd and caged and fetter'd at their feet.

That we who serve them are no coward race,
Let prove the ample realm we won in arms: . .
And I their leader am not of the sons
Of the feeble! As he spake, he reach'd a mace,
The trunk and knotted root of some young tree,
Such as old Albion and his monster-brood
From the oak-forest for their weapons pluck'd,
When father Brute and Corineus set foot
On the White Island first. Lo this, quoth he,
My club! and he threw back his robe; and this
The arm that wields it! . . 'Twas my father's once:
Erillyab's husband, King Tepollomi,
He felt its weight. . . Did I not show thee him?
He lights me at my evening banquet. There,
In very deed, the dead Tepollomi
Stood up against the wall, by devilish art
Preserv'd; and from his black and shrivell'd hand
The steady lamp hung down.
My spirit rose
At that abomination; I exclaimed
Thou art of noble nature, and full fain
Would I in friendship plight my hand with thine;
But till that body in the grave be laid,
Till thy polluted altars be made pure,
There is no peace between us. May my God,
Who, though thou know'st Him not, is also thine,
And after death will be thy dreadful Judge,
May it please Him to visit thee, and shed
His mercy on thy soul. . . But if thy heart
Be harden'd to the proof, come when thou wilt!
I know thy power, and thou shalt then know mine.

VII. THE BATTLE

Now then to meet the war! Erillyab's call
Roused all her people to revenge their wrongs;
And at Lincoya's voice, the mountain tribes
Arose and broke their bondage. Imeantime
Took counsel with Cadwallon and his sire,
And told them of the numbers we must meet,
And what advantage from the mountain-straits
I thought, as in the Saxon wars, to win.
Thou saw'st their weapons then, Cadwallon said;
Are they like these rude works of ignorance,
Bone-headed shafts, and spears of wood, and shields,
Strong only for such strife?
We had to cope
With wiser enemies, and abler arm'd.
What for the sword they wielded was a staff
Set thick with stones athwart; you would have deem'd
The uncouth shape was cumbrous; but a hand
Expert, and practised to its use, could drive
The sharpen'd flints with deadly impulse down.
Their mail, if mail it may be call'd, was woven
Of vegetable down, like finest flax,
Bleach'd to the whiteness of the new-fallen snow,
To every bend and motion flexible,
Light as a warrior's summer-garb in peace;
Yet, in that lightest, softest, habergeon,
Harmless the sharp stone arrow-head would hang.
Others, of higher office, were array'd
In feathery breast-plates of more gorgeous hue
Than the gay plumage of the mountain-cock,

Or pheasant's glittering pride. But what were these,
Or what the thin gold hauberk, when opposed
To arms like ours in battle ? What the mail
Of wood fire-harden'd, or the wooden helm,
Against the iron arrows of the South,
Against our northern spears, or battle-axe,
Or good sword, wielded by a British hand ?

Then, quoth Cadwallon, at the wooden helm,
Of these weak arms the weakest, let the sword
Hew, and the spear be thrust. The mountaineers,
So long inured to crouch beneath their yoke,
We will not trust in battle; from the heights
They with their arrows may annoy the foe;
And when our closer strife has won the fray,
Then let them loose for havoc.
O my son,
Exclaim'd the blind old man, thou counsellest ill !
Blood will have blood, revenge beget revenge,
Evil must come of evil. We shall win,
Certes, a cheap and easy victory
In the first field; their arrows from our arms
Will fall, and on the hauberk and the helm
The flint-edge blunt and break; while through their limbs,
Naked, or vainly fenced, the griding steel
Shall sheer its mortal way. But what are we
Against a nation ? Other hosts will rise
In endless warfare, with perpetual fights
Dwindling our all-too-few; or multitudes
Will wear and weary us, till we sink subdued
By the very toil of conquest. Ye are strong;
But he who puts his trust in mortal strength
Leans on a broken reed. First prove your power;
Be in the battle terrible, but spare
The fallen, and follow not the flying foe:
Then may ye win a nobler victory,
So dealing with the captives as to fill
Their hearts with wonder, gratitude, and awe,
That love shall mingle with their fear, and fear
'Stablish the love, else wavering. Let them see,
That as more pure and gentle is your faith,
Yourselves are gentler, purer. Ye shall be
As gods among them, if ye thus obey
God's precepts.
Soon the mountain tribes, in arms
Rose at Lincoya's call: a numerous host,
More than in numbers, in the memory
Of long oppression, and revengeful hope,
A formidable foe. I station'd them
Where at the entrance of the rocky straits,
Secure themselves, their arrows might command
The coming army. On the plain below
We took our stand, between the mountain-base
And the green margin of the waters. Soon
Their long array came on. Oh what a pomp
And pride and pageantry of war was there !
Not half so gaudied, for their May-day mirth,
All wreathed and ribanded, our youths and maids,
As these stern Aztecas in war attire !
The golden glitterance, and the feather-mail,
More gay than glittering gold; and round the helm
A coronal of high upstanding plumes
Green as the spring grass in the sunny shower;
Or scarlet bright, as in the wintry wood

The cluster'd holly ; or of purple tint, . .
Whereto shall that be liken'd ? to what gem
Indiadem'd, . . what flower, . . what insect's wing ?
With war songs and wild music they came on,
We the while kneeling, raised with one accord
The hymn of supplication.
Front to front,
And now the embattled armies stood : a band
Of priests, all sable-garmented, advanced ;
They piled a heap of sedge before our host,
And warn'd us, . . Sons of Ocean ! from the land
Of Aztlan, while ye may, depart in peace !
Before the fire shall be extinguish'd, hence !
Or, even as yon dry sedge amid the flame,
So ye shall be consumed . . The arid heap
They kindled, and the rapid flame ran up,
And blazed, and died away. Then from his bow,
With steady hand, their chosen archer loosed
The Arrow of the Omen. To its mark
The shaft of divination fled ; it smote
Cadwallon's plated breast ; the brittle point
Rebounded. He, contemptuous of their faith,
Stoopt for the shaft, and while with zealous speed
To the rescue they rushed onward, snapping it
Asunder, toss'd the fragments back in scorn.

Fierce was their onset ; never in the field
Encounter'd I with braver enemies.
Nor marvel ye, nor think it to their shame,
If soon they stagger'd, and gave way, and fled,
So many from so few ; they saw their darts
Recoil, their lances shiver, and their swords
Fall ineffectual, blunted with the blow.
Think ye no shame of Aztlan that they fled,
When the bowmen of Deheubarth plied so well
Their shafts with fatal aim ; through the thin gold
Or feather-mail, while Gwyneth's deep-driven spears
Pierced to the bone and vitals ; when they saw
The falchion, flashing late so lightning-like,
Quench'd in their own life-blood. Our mountaineers
Shower'd from the heights, meantime, an arrowy storm,
Themselves secure ; and we who bore the brunt
Of battle, iron men, impassable,
Stood in our strength unbroken. Marvel not
If then the brave felt fear, already impress'd
That day by ominous thoughts, to fear akin ;
For so it chanced, high Heaven ordaining so,
The King, who should have led his people forth,
At the army-head, as they began their march,
Was with sore sickness stricken ; and the stroke
Came like the act and arm of very God,
So suddenly, and in that point of time.

A gallant man was he who in his stead
That day commanded Aztlan : his long hair,
Tufted with many a cotton lock, proclaim'd
Of princely prowess many a feat achieved
In many a field of fame. Oft had he led
The Aztecas, with happy fortune, forth ;
Yet could not now Yuhidthiton inspire

His host with hope: he, not the less, that day,
True to his old renown, and in the hour
Of rout and ruin with collected mind,
Sounded his signals shrill, and in the voice
Of loud reproach and anger, and brave shame,
Call'd on the people . . But when nought avail'd,
Seizing the standard from the timid hand
Which held it in dismay, alone he turn'd,
For honourable death resolved, and praise
That would not die. Thereat the braver chiefs
Rallied, anew their signals rung around,
And Aztlan, seeing how we spared her flight,
Took heart, and roll'd the tide of battle back.
But when Cadwallon from the chieftain's grasp
Had cut the standard-staff away, and stunn'd
And stretch'd him at his mercy on the field,
Then fled the enemy in utter rout,
Broken and quell'd at heart. One chief alone
Bestrode the body of Yuhidthiton;
Bareheaded did young Malinal bestride
His brother's body, wiping from his brow
With the shield-hand the blinding blood away,
And dealing frantic'ly with broken sword
Obstinate wrath, the last resisting foe.
Him, in his own despite, we seized and saved.

Then in the moment of our victory,
We purified our hands from blood, and knelt,
And pour'd to heaven the grateful prayer of praise
And raised the choral psalm. Triumphant thus
To the hills we went our way; the mountaineers
With joy, and dissonant song, and antic dance;
The captives sullenly, deeming that they went
To meet the certain death of sacrifice,
Yet stern and undismay'd. We bade them know
Ours was a law of mercy and of love;
We heal'd their wounds, and set the prisoners free.
Bear ye, quoth I, my bidding to your King;
Say to him, Did the stranger speak to thee
The words of truth, and hath he proved his power?
Thus saith the Lord of Ocean, in the name
Of God, Almighty, Universal God,
Thy Judge and mine, whose battles I have fought,
Whose bidding I obey, whose will I speak;
Shed thou no more in impious sacrifice
The life of man; restore unto the grave
The dead Tepollomi; set this people free,
And peace shall be between us.
On the morrow
Came messengers from Aztlan, in reply.
Coanocotzin with sore malady
Hath, by the Gods, been stricken: will the Lord
Of Ocean visit his sick bed? . . He told
Of wrath, and as he said, the vengeance came;
Let him bring healing now, and 'stablish peace.

VIII. THE PEACE

Again, and now with better hope, I sought
The city of the King! there went with me
Iolo, old Iolo, he who knows
The virtue of all herbs of mount or vale,
Or greenwood shade, or quiet brooklet's bed;
Whatever lore of science, or of song,
Sages and Bards of old have handed down.
Aztlan that day pour'd forth her swarming sons,

To wait my coming. Will he ask his God
To stay the hand of anger? was the cry,
The general cry, . . and will he save the King?
Coanocotzin too had nurst that thought,
And the strong hope upheld him; he put forth
His hand, and raised a quick and anxious eye, . .
Is it not peace and mercy? . . thou art come
To pardon and to save!
I answer'd him,
That power, O King of Aztlan, is not mine!
Such help as human cunning can bestow,
Such human help I bring; but health and life
Are in the hand of God, who at his will
Gives or withdraws; and what he wills is best.
Then old Iolo took his arm, and felt
The symptom, and he bade him have good hope,
For life was strong within him. So it proved:
The drugs of subtle virtue did their work;
They quell'd the venom of the malady,
And from the frame expell'd it, . . that a sleep
Fell on the King, a sweet and natural sleep,
And from its healing he awoke refresh'd
Though weak, and joyful as a man who felt
The peril pass'd away.
Ere long we spake
Of concord, and how best to knit the bonds
Of lasting friendship. When we won this land,
Coanocotzin said, these fertile vales
Were not, as now, with fruitful groves embower'd,
Nor rich with towns and populous villages,
Abounding, as thou seest, with life and joy;
Our fathers found bleak heath, and desert moor,
Wild woodland, and savannahs wide and waste,
Rude country of rude dwellers. From our arms
They to the mountain fastnesses retired,
And long with obstinate and harassing war
Provoked us, hoping not for victory,
Yet mad for vengeance; till Tepollomi
Fell by my father's hand; and with their King,
The strength and flower of all their youth cut off,
All in one desolating day, they took
The yoke upon their necks. What wouldest thou
That to these Hoamen I should now concede?
Lord of the Ocean, speak!
Let them be free!
Quoth I. I come not from my native isle
To wage the war of conquest, and cast out
Your people from the land which time and toil
Have rightly made their own. The land is wide;
There is enough for all. So they be freed
From that accursed tribute, and ye shed
The life of man no more in sacrifice,
In the most holy name of God I say,
Let there be peace between us!
Thou hast won
Their liberty, the King replied: henceforth,
Free as they are, if they provoke the war,
Reluctantly will Aztlan raise her arm.
Be thou the peace-preserver. To what else
Thou say'st, instructed by calamity,
I lend a humble ear; but to destroy
The worship of my fathers, or abate
Or change one point, lies not within the reach
And scope of kingly power. Speak thou hereon
With those whom we hold holy, with the sons
Of the Temple, they who commune with the Gods;
Awe them, for they awe me. So we resolved

That when the bones of King Tepollomi
Had had their funeral honours, they and I
Should by the green-lake side, before the King,
And in the presence of the people, hold
A solemn talk.
Then to the mountain-huts,
The bearer of good tidings, I return'd,
Leading the honourable train who bore
The relics of the King; not parch'd and black,
As I had seen the unnatural corpse stand up,
In ghastly mockery of the attitude
And act of life, . . his bones had now been blanch'd
With decent reverence. Soon the mountaineers
Saw the white deer-skin shroud; the rumour spread;
They gather'd round, and follow'd in our train.
Before Erillyab's hut the bearers laid
Their burden down. She, calm of countenance,
And with dry eye, albeit her hand the while
Shook like an agueish limb, unroll'd the shroud.
The multitude stood gazing silently,
The young and old alike all awed and hush'd
Under the holy feeling, . . and the hush
Was aweful; that huge multitude so still,
That we could hear distinct the mountain-stream
Roll down its rocky channel far away.
And this was all; sole ceremony this,
The sight of death and silence, . . till at length,
In the ready grave his bones were laid to rest.
'Twas in her hut and home, yea, underneath
The marriage bed, the bed of widowhood,
Her husband's grave was dug; on softest fur
The bones were laid, with fur were covered o'er,
Then heap'd with bark and boughs, and, last of all,
Earth was to earth trod down.
And now the day
Appointed for our talk of peace was come.
On the green margin of the lake we met,
Elders, and Priests, and Chiefs; the multitude
Around the Circle of the Council stood.
Then, in the midst, Coanocotzin rose,
And thus the King began: Pabas and Chiefs
Of Aztlan, hither ye are come to learn
The law of peace. The Lord of Ocean saith,
The Tribes whom he hath gathered underneath
The wings of his protection, shall be free;
And in the name of his great God he saith,
That ye shall never shed in sacrifice
The blood of man. Are ye content? that so
We may together here, in happy hour,
Bury the sword.
Hereat a Paba rose,
And answer'd for his brethren: . . He hath won
The Hoamen's freedom, that their blood no more
Shall on our altars flow; for this the Lord
Of Ocean fought, and Aztlan yielded it
In battle. But if we forego the rites
Of our forefathers, if we wrong the Gods,
Who give us timely sun and timely showers,
Their wrath will be upon us; they will shut
Their ears to prayer, and turn away the eyes
Which watch for our well-doing, and withhold
The hands dispensing our prosperity.

Cynetha then arose, between his son
And me supported, rose the blind old man.
Ye wrong us, men of Aztlan, if ye deem
We bid ye wrong the Gods; accurst were he

Who would obey such bidding, . . more accurst
The wretch who should enjoin impiety.
It is the will of God which we make known,
Your God and ours. Know ye not Him who laid
The deep foundations of the earth, and built
The arch of heaven, and kindled yonder sun,
And breathed into the woods and waves and sky
The power of life ?
We know Him, they replied,
The great For-Ever One, the God of Gods,
Ipalnemoani, He by whom we live !
And we too, quoth Ayayaca, we know
And worship the Great Spirit, who in clouds
And storms, in mountain caves, and by the fall
Of waters, in the woodland solitude,
And in the night and silence of the sky,
Doth make his being felt. We also know,
And fear, and worship the Beloved One.

Our God, replied Cynetha, is the same,
The Universal Father. He to the first
Made his will known ; but when men multiplied,
The Evil Spirits darken'd them, and sin
And misery came into the world, and men
Forsook the way of truth, and gave to stocks
And stones the incommunicable name.
Yet with one chosen, one peculiar Race,
The knowledge of their Father and their God
Remain'd, from sire to son transmitted down.
While the bewilder'd Nations of the earth
Wander'd in fogs, and were in darkness lost,
The light abode with them ; and when at times
They sinn'd and went astray, the Lord hath put
A voice into the mouths of holy men,
Raising up witnesses unto himself,
That so the saving knowledge of his name
Might never fail ; nor the glad promise, given
To our first parent, that at length his sons,
From error, sin, and wretchedness redeem'd,
Should form one happy family of love.
Nor ever hath that light, howe'er bedimm'd,
Wholly been quench'd ; still in the heart of man
A feeling and an instinct it exists,
His very nature's stamp and privilege,
Yea, of his life the life. I tell ye not,
O Aztecas ! of things unknown before ;
I do but waken up a living sense
That sleeps within ye ! Do ye love the Gods
Who call for blood ? Doth the poor sacrifice
Go with a willing step, to lay his life
Upon their altars ? . . Good must come of good,
Evil of evil ; if the fruit be death,
The poison springeth from the sap and root,
And the whole tree is deadly ; if the rites
Be evil, they who claim them are not good,
Not to be worshipp'd then ; for to obey
The evil will is evil. Aztecas !
From the For-Ever, the Beloved One,
The Universal Only God I speak,
Your God and mine, our Father and our Judge.
Hear ye his law, . . hear ye the perfect law
Of love, ' Do ye to others, as ye would
That they should do to you ! ' He bids us meet
To praise his name, in thankfulness and joy ;
He bids us, in our sorrow, pray to him,
The Comforter. Love him, for he is good !
Fear him, for he is just ! Obey his will,
For who can bear his anger !
While he spake,
They stood with open mouth, and motionless sight,

Watching his countenance, as though the voice
Were of a God; for sure it seem'd that less
Than inspiration could not have infused
That eloquent passion in a blind man's face.
And when he ceased, all eyes at once were turn'd
Upon the Pabas, waiting their reply,
If that to that acknowledged argument
Reply could be devised. But they themselves,
Stricken by the truth, were silent; and they look'd
Toward their chief and mouth-piece, the High Priest
Tezozomoc; he too was pale and mute,
And when he gather'd up his strength to speak,
Speech fail'd him, his lip falter'd, and his eye
Fell utterly abash'd, and put to shame.
But in the Chiefs, and in the multitude,
And in the King of Aztlan, better thoughts
Were working; for the Spirit of the Lord
That day was moving in the heart of man.
Coanocotzin rose: Pabas, and Chiefs,
And men of Aztlan, ye have heard a talk
Of peace and love, and there is no reply.
Are ye content with what the Wise Man saith?
And will ye worship God in that good way
Which God himself ordains? If it be so,
Together here will we in happy hour
Bury the sword.
Tezozomoc replied,
This thing is new, and in the land till now
Unheard: . . what marvel, therefore, if we find
No ready answer? Let our Lord the King
Do that which seemeth best.
Yuhidthiton,
Chief of the Chiefs of Aztlan, next arose.
Of all her numerous sons, could Aztlan boast
No mightier arm in battle, nor whose voice
To more attentive silence hush'd the hall
Of council. When the Wise Man spake, quoth he,
I ask'd of mine own heart if it were so,
And, as he said, the living instinct there
Answer'd, and own'd the truth. In happy hour,
O King of Aztlan, did the Ocean Lord
Through the great waters hither wend his way;
For sure he is the friend of God and man.

With that an uproar of assent arose
From the whole people, a tumultuous shout
Of universal joy and glad acclaim.
But when Coanocotzin raised his hand,
That he might speak, the clamour and the buz
Ceased, and the multitude, in tiptoe hope,
Attent and still, await the final voice.
Then said the Sovereign, Hear, O Aztecas,
Your own united will! From this day forth
No life upon the altar shall be shed,
No blood shall flow in sacrifice; the rites
Shall all be pure, such as the blind Old Man,
Whom God hath taught, will teach. This ye have will'd;
And therefore it shall be!
The King hath said!
Like thunder the collected voice replied:
Let it be so!
Lord of the Ocean, then
Pursued the King of Aztlan, we will now
Lay the war-weapon in the grave, and join
In right-hand friendship. By our custom, blood
Should sanctify and bind the solemn act;
But by what oath and ceremony thou
Shalt proffer, by the same will Aztlan swear.
Nor oath, nor ceremony, I replied,
O King; is needful. To his own good word
The good and honourable man will act,
Oaths will not curb the wicked. Here we stand

In the broad day-light; the For-Ever One,
The Every-Where beholds us. In his sight
We join our hands in peace: if e'er again
Should these right hands be raised in enmity,
Upon the offender will his judgement fall.

The grave was dug; Coanocotzin laid
His weapon in the earth; Erillyab's son,
Young Amalahta, for the Hoamen, laid
His hatchet there; and there I laid the sword.

Here let me end. What follow'd was the work
Of peace, no theme for story; how we fix'd
Our sojourn in the hills, and sow'd our fields,
And, day by day, saw all things prospering.
Thence have I come, Goervyl, to announce
The tidings of my happy enterprize;
There I return, to take thee to our home.
I love my native land; with as true love
As ever yet did warm a British heart,
Love I the green fields of the beautiful Isle,
My father's heritage! But far away,
Where nature's booner hand has blest the earth,
My lot hath been assign'd; beyond the seas
Madoc hath found his home; beyond the seas
A country for his children hath he chosen,
A land wherein their portion may be peace.

IX. EMMA

But while Aberfraw echoed to the sounds
Of merriment and music, Madoc's heart
Mourn'd for his brethren. Therefore, when no ear
Was nigh, he sought the King, and said to him,
To-morrow, for Mathraval I set forth;
Longer I must not linger here, to pass
The easy hours in feast and revelry,
Forgetful of my people far away.
I go to tell the tidings of success,
And seek new comrades. What if it should chance
That, for this enterprize, our brethren,
Foregoing all their hopes and fortunes here,
Would join my banner? . . Let me send abroad
Their summons, O my brother! so secure,
You may forgive the past, and once again
Will peace and concord bless our father's house.

Hereafter will be time enow for this,
The King replied; thy easy nature sees not,
How, if the traitors for thy banner send
Their bidding round, in open war against me
Their own would soon be spread. I charge thee, Madoc,
Neither to see nor aid these fugitives,
The shame of Owen's blood.
Sullen he spake,
And turn'd away; nor farther commune now
Did Madoc seek, nor had he more endured;
For bitter thoughts were rising in his heart,
And anguish, kindling anger. In such mood
He to his sister's chamber took his way.
She sate with Emma, with the gentle Queen;
For Emma had already learnt to love
The gentle maid. Goervyl saw what thoughts
Troubled her brother's brow. Madoc, she cried,
Thou hast been with the King, been rashly pleading
For Ririd and for Rodri! . . He replied,
I did but ask him little, . . did but say,
Belike our brethren would go forth with me,
To voluntary exile; then, methought,
His fear and jealousy might well have ceased,
And all be safe.

And did the King refuse ?
Quoth Emma : I will plead for them, quoth she,
With dutiful warmth and zeal will plead for them ;
And surely David will not say me nay.

O sister ! cried Goervyl, tempt him not !
Sister, you know him not ! Alas, to touch
That perilous theme is, even in Madoc here,
A perilous folly. . . Sister, tempt him not !
You do not know the King !
But then a fear
Fled to the cheek of Emma, and her eye,
Quickening with wonder, turn'd toward the Prince,
As if expecting that his manly mind
Would mould Goervyl's meaning to a shape
Less fearful, would interpret and amend
The words she hoped she did not hear aright.
Emma was young ; she was a sacrifice
To that cold king-craft, which, in marriage-vows
Linking two hearts, unknowing each of each,
Perverts the ordinance of God, and makes
The holiest tie a mockery and a curse.
Her eye was patient, and she spake in tones
So sweet and of so pensive gentleness,
That the heart felt them. Madoc ! she exclaimed,
Why dost thou hate the Saxons ? O my brother,
If I have heard aright, the hour will come
When the Plantagenet shall wish herself
Among her nobler, happier countrymen,
From these unnatural enmities escaped,
And from the vengeance they must call from Heaven !

Shame then suffused the Prince's countenance,
Mindful how, drunk in anger, he had given
His hatred loose. My sister Queen, quoth he,
Marvel not you that with my mother's milk
I suck'd that hatred in. Have they not been
The scourge and the devouring sword of God,
The curse and pestilence which he hath sent
To root us from the land ? Alas, our crimes
Have drawn this dolorous visitation down !
Our sun hath long been westering ; and the night
And darkness and extinction are at hand.
We are a fallen people ! . . From ourselves
The desolation and the ruin come ;
In our own vitals doth the poison work . .
The House that is divided in itself,
How should it stand ? . . A blessing on you, Lady !
But in this wretched family the strife
Is rooted all too deep ; it is an old
And cankered wound, . . an eating, killing sore,
For which there is no healing. . . If the King
Should ever speak his fears, . . and sure to you
All his most inward thoughts he will make known, . .
Counsel him then to let his brethren share
My enterprize, to send them forth with me
To everlasting exile. . . She hath told you
Too hardly of the King ; I know him well ;
He hath a stormy nature ; and what germs
Of virtue would have budded in his heart,
Cold winds have check'd, and blighting seasons nipt,
Yet in his heart they live. . . A blessing on you,
That you may see their blossom and their fruit !

X. MATHRAVAL

Now for Mathraval went Prince Madoc forth;
O'er Menai's ebbing tide, up mountain-paths,
Beside grey mountain-stream, and lonely lake,
And through old Snowdon's forest-solitude,
He held right on his solitary way.
Nor paused he in that rocky vale, where oft
Up the familiar path, with gladder pace,
His steed had hastened to the well-known door, . .
That valley, o'er whose crags, and sprinkled trees,
And winding stream, so oft his eye had loved
To linger, gazing, as the eve grew dim,
From Dolwyddelan's Tower; . . alas! from thence
As from his brother's monument, he turn'd
A loathing eye, and through the rocky vale
Sped on. From morn till noon, from noon till eve,
He travelled on his way: and when at morn
Again the Ocean Chief bestrode his steed,
The heights of Snowdon on his backward glance
Hung like a cloud in heaven. O'er heath and hill
And barren height he rode; and darker now,
In loftier majesty thy mountain-seat,
Star-loving Idris, rose. Nor turn'd he now
Beside Kregennan, where his infant feet
Had trod Ednywain's hall; nor loitered he
In the green vales of Powys, till he came
Where Warnway rolls its waters underneath
Ancient Mathraval's venerable walls,
Cyveilioc's princely and paternal seat.

But Madoc sprung not forward now to greet
The chief he loved, for from Cyveilioc's hall
The voice of harp and song commingled came;
It was that day the feast of victory there;
Around the Chieftain's board the warriors sate;
The sword and shield and helmet, on the wall
And round the pillars, were in peace hung up;
And, as the flashes of the central fire
At fits arose, a dance of wavy light
Play'd o'er the reddening steel. The Chiefs, who late
So well had wielded in the work of war
Those weapons, sate around the board, to quaff
The beverage of the brave, and hear their fame.
Mathraval's Lord, the Poet and the Prince,
Cyveilioc stood before them, . . in his pride;
His hands were on the harp, his eyes were closed,
His head, as if in reverence to receive
The inspiration, bent; anon, he raised
His glowing countenance and brighter eye,
And swept with passionate hand the ringing harp.

Fill high the Hirlas Horn! to Grufydd bear
Its frothy beverage, . . from his crimson lance
The invader fled; . . fill high the gold-tipt Horn!
Heard ye in Maelor the step of war . .
The hastening shout . . the onset? . . Did ye hear
The clash and clang of arms . . the battle-din,
Loud as the roar of Ocean, when the winds
At midnight are abroad? . . the yell of wounds . .
The rage . . the agony? . . Give to him the Horn

Whose spear was broken, and whose buckler pierced
With many a shaft, yet not the less he fought
And conquered; . . therefore let Ednyved share
The generous draught, give him the long blue Horn!
Pour out again, and fill again the spoil
Of the wild bull, with silver wrought of yore;
And bear the golden lip to Tudyr's hand,
Eagle of battle! For Moreiddig fill
The honourable Hirlas! . . Where are They?
Where are the noble Brethren? Wolves of war,
They kept their border well, they did their part,
Their fame is full, their lot is praise and song. . .
A mournful song to me, a song of woe! . .
Brave Brethren! for their honour brim the cup,
Which they shall quaff no more.
We drove away
The strangers from our land; profuse of life,
Our warriors rush'd to battle, and the Sun
Saw from his noontide fields their manly strife,
Pour thou the flowing mead! Cupbearer, fill
The Hirlas! for hadst thou beheld the day
Of Llidom, thou hadst known how well the Chiefs
Deserve this honour now. Cyveilioc's shield
Were they in danger, when the Invader came;
Be praise and liberty their lot on earth,
And joy be theirs in heaven!
Here ceased the song;
Then from the threshold on the rush-strewn floor
Madoc advanced. Cyveilioc's eye was now
To present forms awake, but even as still
He felt his harp-chords throb with dying sounds,
The heat and stir and passion had not yet
Subsided in his soul. Again he struck
The loud-toned harp. . . Pour from the silver vase,
And brim the honourable Horn, and bear
The draught of joy to Madoc, . . he who first
Explored the desert ways of Ocean, first
Through the wide waste of sea and sky, held on
Undaunted, till upon another World,
The Lord and Conqueror of the Elements,
He set his foot triumphant? Fill for him
The Hirlas! fill the honourable Horn!
This for Mathraval is a happy hour,
When Madoc, her hereditary guest,
Appears within her honour'd walls again,
Madoc, the British Prince, the Ocean Lord,
Who never for injustice rear'd his arm;
Whose presence fills the heart of every foe
With fear, the heart of every friend with joy;
Give him the Hirlas Horn, fill, till the draught
Of joy shall quiver o'er the golden brim!
In happy hour the hero hath return'd!
In happy hour the friend, the brother treads
Cyveilioc's floor!
He sprung to greet his guest;
The cordial grasp of fellowship was given;
So in Mathraval there was double joy
On that illustrious day; they gave their guest
The seat of honour, and they fill'd for him
The Hirlas Horn. Cyveilioc and his Chiefs,
All eagerly, with wonder-waiting eyes,
Look to the Wanderer of the Water's tale.
Nor mean the joy which kindled Madoc's brow,
When as he told of daring enterprize
Crown'd with deserved success. Intent they heard

Of all the blessings of that happier clime ;
And when the adventurer spake of soon return,
Each on the other gazed, as if to say,
Methinks it were a goodly lot to dwell
In that fair land in peace.
Then said the Prince
Of Powys, Madoc, at an happy time
Thou hast toward Mathraval bent thy way ;
For on the morrow, in the eye of light,
Our bards will hold their congress. Seekest thou
Comrades to share success ? proclaim abroad
Thine invitation there, and it will spread
Far as our fathers' ancient tongue is known.

Thus at Mathraval went the Hirlas round ;
A happy day was that ! Of other years
They talk'd, of common toils, and fields of war
Where they fought side by side ; of Corwen's scene
Of glory, and of comrades now no more : . .
Themes of delight, and grief which brought its joy.
Thus they beguiled the pleasant hours, while night
Waned fast away ; then late they laid them down,
Each on his bed of rushes, stretch'd around
The central fire.
The Sun was newly risen
When Madoc join'd his host, no longer now
Clad as the conquering chief of Maelor,
In princely arms, but in his nobler robe,
The sky-blue mantle of the Bard, arrayed.
So for the place of meeting they set forth ;
And now they reach'd Melangell's lonely church.
Amid a grove of evergreens it stood,
A garden and a grove, where every grave
Was deck'd with flowers, or with unfading plants
O'ergrown, sad rue, and funeral rosemary.
Here Madoc paused. The morn is young, quoth he,
A little while to old remembrance given
Will not belate us. . . Many a year hath fled,
Cyveilioc, since you led me here, and told
The legend of the Saint. Come ! . . be not loth !
We will not loiter long. . . So soon to mount
The bark, which will for ever bear me hence,
I would not willingly pass by one spot
Which thus recalls the thought of other times,
Without a pilgrim's visit.
Thus he spake,
And drew Cyveilioc through the churchyard porch,
To the rude image of Saint Monacel.
Dost thou remember, Owen, said the Prince,
When first I was thy guest in early youth,
That once, as we had wandered here at eve,
You told, how here a poor and hunted hare
Ran to the Virgin's feet, and look'd to her
For life ? . . I thought, when listening to the tale,
She had a merciful heart, and that her face
Must with a saintly gentleness have beam'd,
When beasts could read its virtue. Here we sate
Upon the jutting root of this old yeugh. . .
Dear friend ! so pleasant didst thou make those days,
That in my heart, long as my heart shall beat,
Minutest recollections still will live,
Still be the source of joy.

As Madoc spake,
His glancing eye fell on a monument,
Around whose base the rosemary droop'd down,
As yet not rooted well. Sculptured above,
A warrior lay; the shield was on his arm;
Madoc approach'd, and saw the blazonry, . .
A sudden chill ran through him, as he read,
Here Yorwerth lies, . . it was his brother's grave.

Cyveilioc took him by the hand: For this,
Madoc, was I so loth to enter here!
He sought the sanctuary, but close upon him
The murderers follow'd, and by yonder copse
The stroke of death was given. All I could
Was done; . . I saw him here consign'd to rest,
Daily due masses for his soul are sung,
And duly hath his grave been deck'd with flowers.

So saying, from the place of death he led
The silent Prince. But lately, he pursued,
Llewelyn was my guest, thy favourite boy.
For thy sake and his own, it was my hope
That at Mathraval he would make his home:
He had not needed then a father's love.
But he, I know not on what enterprize,
Was brooding ever; and those secret thoughts
Drew him away. God prosper the brave boy!
It were a happy day for this poor land
If e'er Llewelyn mount his rightful throne.

XI. THE GORSEDD

The place of meeting was a high hill-top,
Nor bower'd with trees nor broken by the plough,
Remote from human dwellings and the stir
Of human life, and open to the breath
And to the eye of Heaven. In days of old,
There had the circling stones been planted; there,
From earliest ages, the primeval lore,
Through Bard to Bard with reverence handed down:
They whom to wonder, or the love of song,
Or reverence of their fathers' ancient rites
Drew thither, stood without the ring of stones.
Cyveilioc entered to the initiate Bards,
Himself, albeit his hands were stain'd with war,
Initiate; for the Order, in the lapse
Of years and in their nation's long decline
From the first rigour of their purity
Somewhat had fallen. The Masters of the Song
Were clad in azure robes, for in that hue
Deduced from Heaven, which o'er a sinful world
Spreads its eternal canopy serene,
Meet emblem did the ancient Sages see
Of unity and peace and spotless truth.

Within the stones of Federation there,
On the green turf, and under the blue sky,
A noble band, the Bards of Britain stood,
Their heads in reverence bare, and bare of foot.
A deathless brotherhood! Cyveilioc there,
Lord of the Hirlas; Llywarc there was seen,
And old Cynddelow, to whose lofty song,
So many a time amid his father's court
Resigning up his soul, had Madoc given

The flow of feeling loose. But Madoc's heart
Was full; old feelings and remembrances,
And thoughts from which was no escape, arose;
He was not there to whose sweet lay, so oft,
With all a brother's fond delight, he lov'd
To listen, . . Hoel was not there! . . the hand
That once so well, amid the triple chords,
Moved in the rapid maze of harmony,
It had no motion now; the lips were dumb
Which knew all tones of passion; and that heart,
That warm ebullient heart, was cold and still
Upon its bed of clay. He look'd around,
And there was no familiar countenance,
None but Cynddelow's face, which he had learnt
In childhood, and old age had set its mark,
Making unsightly alteration there.
Another generation had sprung up,
And made him feel how fast the days of man
Flow by, how soon their number is told out.
He knew not then that Llywarc's lay should give
His future fame; his spirit on the past
Brooding, beheld with no forefeeling joy
The rising sons of song, who there essay'd
Their eaglet flight. But there among the youth
In the green vesture of their earliest rank,
Or with the aspirants clad in motley garb,
Young Benvras stood; and, one whose favoured race
Heaven with the hereditary power had blest,
The old Gowalchmai's not degenerate child;
And there another Einion; gifted youths,
And heirs of immortality on earth,
Whose after-strains, through many a distant age
Cambria shall boast, and love the songs that tell
The fame of Owen's house.
There, in the eye
Of light and in the face of day, the rites
Began. Upon the stone of Covenant
First the sheathed sword was laid; the Master then
Upraised his voice, and cried, Let them who seek
The high degree and sacred privilege
Of Bardic science, and of Cimbric lore,
Here to the Bards of Britain make their claim!
Thus having said, the Master bade the youths
Approach the place of peace, and merit there
The Bard's most honourable name. With that,
Heirs and transmittors of the ancient light,
The youths advanced; they heard the Cimbric lore,
From earliest days preserved; they struck their harps,
And each in due succession raised the song.

Last of the aspirants, as of greener years,
Young Caradoc advanced; his lip as yet
Scarce darken'd with its down, his flaxen locks
Wreathed in contracting ringlets waving low;
Bright were his large blue eyes, and kindled now
With that same passion that inflamed his cheek;
Yet in his cheek there was the sickliness
Which thought and feeling leave, wearing away
The hue of youth. Inclining on his harp,
He, while his comrades in probation song
Approved their claim, stood hearkening as it seem'd,
And yet like unintelligible sounds
He heard the symphony and voice attuned;

Even in such feelings as, all undefined,
Come with the flow of waters to the soul,
Or with the motions of the moonlight sky.
But when his bidding came, he at the call
Arising from that dreamy mood, advanced,
Threw back his mantle, and began the lay.

Where are the sons of Gavran? where his tribe
The faithful? following their beloved chief,
They the Green Islands of the Ocean sought;
Nor human tongue hath told, nor human ear,
Since from the silver shores they went their way,
Hath heard their fortunes. In his crystal Ark,
Whither sail'd Merlin with his band of Bards,
Old Merlin, master of the mystic lore?
Belike his crystal Ark, instinct with life,
Obedient to the mighty Master, reach'd
The Land of the Departed; there, belike,
They in the clime of immortality,
Themselves immortal, drink the gales of bliss,
Which o'er Flathinnis breathe eternal spring,
Blending whatever odours make the gale
Of evening sweet, whatever melody
Charms the wood-traveller. In their high roof'd halls
There, with the Chiefs of other days, feel they
The mingled joy pervade them? . . Or beneath
The mid-sea waters, did that crystal Ark
Down to the secret depths of Ocean plunge
Its fated crew? Dwell they in coral bowers
With Mermaid loves, teaching their paramours
The songs that stir the sea, or make the winds
Hush, and the waves be still? In fields of joy
Have they their home, where central fires maintain
Perpetual summer, and an emerald light
Pervades the green translucent element?

Twice have the sons of Britain left her shores,
As the fledged eaglets quit their native nest;
Twice over ocean have her fearless sons
For ever sail'd away. Again they launch
Their vessels to the deep. . . Who mounts the bark?
The son of Owen, the beloved Prince,
Who never for injustice rear'd his arm.
Respect his enterprize, ye Ocean Waves!
Ye Winds of Heaven, waft Madoc on his way!
The Waves of Ocean, and the Winds of Heaven,
Became his ministers, and Madoc found
The world he sought.
Who seeks the better land?
Who mounts the vessel for a world of peace?
He who hath felt the throb of pride, to hear
Our old illustrious annals; who was taught
To lisp the fame of Arthur, to revere
Great Caratach's unconquer'd soul, and call
That gallant chief his countryman, who led
The wrath of Britain from her chalky shores
To drive the Roman robber. He who loves
His country, and who feels his country's shame;
Whose bones amid a land of servitude
Could never rest in peace; who if he saw
His children slaves, would feel a pang in Heaven, . .
He mounts the bark, to seek for liberty.

Who seeks the better land? The wretched one
Whose joys are blasted all, whose heart is sick,
Who hath no hope, to whom all change is gain,
To whom remember'd pleasures strike a pang
That only guilt should know, . . he mounts the bark,
The Bard will mount the bark of banishment;
The harp of Cambria shall in other lands
Remind the Cambrian of his father's fame; . .
The Bard will seek the land of liberty,
The world of peace. . . O Prince, receive the Bard!

He ceased the song. His cheek, now fever-flush'd,
Was turn'd to Madoc, and his asking eye
Linger'd on him in hope: nor linger'd long
The look expectant; forward sprung the Prince,
And gave to Caradoc the right-hand pledge,
And for the comrade of his enterprize,
With joyful welcome, hail'd the joyful Bard.

Nor needed now the Searcher of the Sea
Announce his enterprize, by Caradoc
In song announced so well; from man to man
The busy murmur spread, while from the Stone
Of Covenant the sword was taken up,
And from the Circle of the Ceremony
The Bards went forth, their meeting now fulfill'd.
The multitude, unheeding all beside,
Of Madoc and his noble enterprize
Held stirring converse on their homeward way,
And spread abroad the tidings of a Land,
Where Plenty dwelt with Liberty and Peace.

XII. DINEVAWR

So in the court of Powys pleasantly,
With hawk and hound afield, and harp in hall,
The days went by; till Madoc, for his heart
Was with Cadwallon, and in early spring
Must he set forth to join him over-sea,
Took his constrain'd farewell. To Dinevawr
He bent his way, whence many a time with Rhys
Had he gone forth to smite the Saxon foe.
The son of Owen greets his father's friend
With reverential joy; nor did the Lord
Of Dinevawr with cold or deaden'd heart
Welcome the Prince he loved; though not with joy
Unmingled now, nor the proud consciousness
Which in the man of tried and approved worth
Could bid an equal hail. Henry had seen
The Lord of Dinevawr between his knees
Vow homage; yea, the Lord of Dinevawr
Had knelt in homage to that Saxon king,
Who set a price upon his father's head,
That Saxon, on whose soul his mother's blood
Cried out for vengeance. Madoc saw the shame
Which Rhys would fain have hidden, and, in grief
For the degenerate land, rejoiced at heart
That now another country was his home.

Musing on thoughts like these, did Madoc roam
Alone along the Towy's winding shore.
The beavers in its bank had hollow'd out
Their social place of dwelling, and had damm'd
The summer-current with their perfect art

Of instinct, erring not in means nor end.
But as the floods of spring had broken down
Their barrier, so its breaches unrepair'd
Were left; and round the piles, which, deeper driven,
Still held their place, the eddying waters whirl'd.
Now in those habitations desolate
One sole survivor dwelt: him Madoc saw,
Labouring alone, beside his hermit house;
And in that mood of melancholy thought, . .
For in his boyhood he had loved to watch
Their social work, and for he knew that man
In bloody sport had well-nigh rooted out
The poor community, . . the ominous sight
Became a grief and burthen. Eve came on;
The dry leaves rustled to the wind, and fell
And floated on the stream; there was no voice
Save of the mournful rooks, who overhead
Wing'd their long line; for fragrance of sweet flowers,
Only the odour of the autumnal leaves; . .
All sights and sounds of sadness. . . And the place
To that despondent mood was ministrant; . .
Among the hills of Gwyneth and its wilds
And mountain glens, perforce he cherish'd still
The hope of mountain liberty; they braced
And knit the heart and arm of hardihood; . .
But here, in these green meads, by these low slopes
And hanging groves, attemper'd to the scene,
His spirit yielded. As he loiter'd on,
There came toward him one in peasant garb,
And call'd his name; . . he started at the sound,
For he had heeded not the man's approach;
And now that sudden and familiar voice
Came on him, like a vision. So he stood
Gazing, and knew him not in the dim light,
Till he again cried, Madoc! . . then he woke,
And knew the voice of Ririd, and sprang on,
And fell upon his neck, and wept for joy
And sorrow.
O my brother! Ririd cried,
Long, very long it is since I have heard
The voice of kindness! . . Let me go with thee!
I am a wanderer in my father's land, . .
Hoel he kill'd, and Yorwerth hath he slain;
Llewelyn hath not where to hide his head
In his own kingdom; Rodri is in chains; . .
Let me go with thee, Madoc, to some land
Where I may look upon the sun, nor dread
The light that may betray me; where at night
I may not, like a hunted beast, rouse up,
If the leaves rustle over me.
The Lord
Of Ocean struggled with his swelling heart.
Let me go with thee? . . but thou didst not doubt
Thy brother? . . Let thee go? . . with what a joy,
Ririd, would I collect the remnant left, . .
The wretched remnant now of Owen's house,
And mount the bark of willing banishment,
And leave the tyrant to his Saxon friends,
And to his Saxon yoke! . . I urged him thus,
Curb'd down my angry spirit, and besought
Only that I might bid our brethren come,

And share my exile; . . and he spurn'd my prayer! . .
Thou hast a gentle pleader at his court;
She may prevail; till then abide thou here; . .
But not in this, the garb of fear and guilt.
Come thou to Dinevawr, . . assume thyself; . .
The good old Rhys will bid thee welcome there,
And the great Palace, like a sanctuary,
Is safe. If then Queen Emma's plea should fail,
My timely bidding hence shall summon thee,
When I shall spread the sail. . . Nay, hast thou learnt
Suspicion? . . Rhys is noble, and no deed
Of treachery ever sullied his fair fame!

Madoc then led his brother to the hall
Of Rhys. I bring to thee a supplicant,
O King, he cried; thou wert my father's friend!
And till our barks be ready in the spring,
I know that here the persecuted son
Of Owen will be safe.
A welcome guest!
The old warrior cried; by his good father's soul,
He is a welcome guest at Dinevawr!
And rising as he spake, he pledged his hand
In hospitality. . . How now! quoth he,
This raiment ill beseems the princely son
Of Owen! . . Ririd at his words was led
Apart; they wash'd his feet, they gave to him
Fine linen as beseem'd his royal race,
The tunic of soft texture woven well,
The broider'd girdle, the broad mantle edged
With fur, and flowing low, the bonnet last,
Form'd of some forest martin's costly spoils.
The Lord of Dinevawr sat at the dice
With Madoc, when he saw him thus array'd,
Returning to the hall. Ay! this is well!
The noble Chief exclaim'd: 'tis as of yore,
When in Aberfraw, at his father's board,
We sat together, after we had won
Peace and rejoicing with our own right hands,
By Corwen, where, commixt with Saxon blood,
Along its rocky channel the dark Dee
Roll'd darker waters. . . Would that all his house
Had, in their day of trouble, thought of me,
And honour'd me like this! David respects
Deheubarth's strength, nor would respect it less,
When such protection leagued its cause with Heaven.

I had forgot his messenger! quoth he,
Arising from the dice. Go, bid him here!
He came this morning at an ill-starr'd hour,
To Madoc he pursued; my lazy grooms
Had let the hounds play havoc in my flock,
And my old blood was chafed. I'faith, the King
Hath chosen well his messenger: . . he saw
That in such mood, I might have render'd him
A hot and hasty answer, and hath waited,
Perhaps to David's service and to mine,
My better leisure.
Now the Messenger
Enter'd the hall; Goagan of Powysland,
He of Caer-Einion was it, who was charged
From Gwyneth to Deheubarth; a brave man
Of copious speech. He told the royal son
Of Gryffidd, the descendant of the line
Of Rhys-ab-Tudyr mawr, that he came there

From David, son of Owen, of the stock
Of kingly Cynan. I am sent, said he,
With friendly greeting; and as I receive
Welcome and honour, so, in David's name,
Am I to thank the Lord of Dinevawr.

Tell on! quoth Rhys, the purport and the cause
Of this appeal?
Of late, some fugitives
Came from the South to Mona, whom the King
Received with generous welcome. Some there were
Who blamed his royal goodness; for they said,
These were the subjects of a rival Prince,
Who, peradventure, would with no such bounty
Cherish a northern suppliant. This they urged,
I know not if from memory of old feuds,
Better forgotten, or in envy. Moved
Hereby, King David swore he would not rest
Till he had put the question to the proof,
Whether with liberal honour the Lord Rhys
Would greet his messenger; but none was found
Of all who had instill'd that evil doubt,
Ready to bear the embassy: I heard it,
And did my person tender, . . for I knew
The nature of Lord Rhys of Dinevawr.

Well! quoth the Chief, Goagan of Powys-land,
This honourable welcome that thou seekest
Wherein may it consist?
In giving me,
Goagan of Powys-land replied, a horse
Better than mine, to bear me home; a suit
Of seemly raiment, and ten marks in coin,
With raiment and two marks for him who leads
My horse's bridle.
For his sake, said Rhys,
Who sent thee, thou shalt have the noblest steed
In all my studs, . . I double thee the marks,
And give the raiment threefold. More than this, . .
Say thou to David, that the guests who sit
At board with me, and drink of my own cup,
Are Madoc and Lord Ririd. Tell the King,
That thus it is Lord Rhys of Dinevawr
Delighteth to do honour to the sons
Of Owen, of his old and honour'd friend.

XIII. LLEWELYN

Farewell, my brother, cried the Ocean Chief;
A little while farewell! as through the gate
Of Dinevawr he pass'd, to pass again
That hospitable threshold never more.
And thou too, O thou good old man, true friend
Of Owen, and of Owen's house, farewell!
'Twill not be told me, Rhys, when thy grey hairs
Are to the grave gone down; but oftentimes
In the distant world I shall remember thee,
And think that, come thy summons when it may,
Thou wilt not leave a braver man behind. . .
Now God be with thee, Rhys!
The old Chief paused
A moment ere he answer'd, as for pain;
Then shaking his hoar head, I never yet
Gave thee this hand unwillingly before!
When for a guest I spread the board, my heart
Will think on him, whom ever with most joy
It leapt to welcome: should I lift again
The spear against the Saxon, . . for old Rhys
Hath that within him yet, that could uplift

The Cimbric spear, . . I then shall wish
his aid,
Who oft has conquer'd with me: when
I kneel
In prayer to Heaven, an old man's
prayer shall beg
A blessing on thee!
Madoc answer'd not,
But press'd his hand in silence, then
sprang up
And spurr'd his courser on. A weary
way,
Through forest and o'er fell, Prince
Madoc rode;
And now he skirts the bay whose reck-
less waves
Roll o'er the plain of Gwaelod: fair
fields
And busy towns and happy villages,
They overwhelm'd in one disastrous
day;
For they by their eternal siege had
sapp'd
The bulwark of the land, while Seithenyn
Took of his charge no thought, till in his
sloth
And riotous cups surprised, he saw the
waves
Roll like an army o'er the levell'd
mound.
A supplicant in other courts, he mourn'd
His crime and ruin; in another's court
The kingly harp of Garanhir was heard,
Wailing his kingdom wreck'd; and
many a Prince,
Warn'd by the visitation, sought and
gain'd
A saintly crown, Tyneio, Merini,
Boda and Brenda and Aëlgyvarch,
Gwynon and Celynin and Gwynodyl.

To Bardsey was the Lord of Ocean
bound;
Bardsey, the holy Islet, in whose soil
Did many a Chief and many a Saint
repose,
His great progenitors. He mounts the
skiff;
Her canvass swells before the breeze, the
sea
Sings round her sparkling keel, and soon
the Lord
Of Ocean treads the venerable shore.

There was not, on that day, a speck
to stain
The azure heaven; the blessed Sun alone
In unapproachable divinity
Career'd, rejoicing in his fields of light.
How beautiful, beneath the bright blue
sky,
The billows heave! one glowing green
expanse,
Save where along the bending line of
shore
Such hue is thrown, as when the pea-
cock's neck
Assumes its proudest tint of amethyst,
Embathed in emerald glory. All the
flocks
Of Ocean are abroad: like floating
foam
The sea-gulls rise and fall upon the
waves;
With long protruded neck the cor-
morants
Wing their far flight aloft, and round
and round
The plovers wheel, and give their note
of joy.
It was a day that sent into the heart
A summer feeling: even the insect
swarms
From their dark nooks and coverts
issued forth,
To sport through one day of existence
more;
The solitary primrose on the bank
Seem'd now as though it had no cause
to mourn
Its bleak autumnal birth; the Rocks,
and Shores,
The Forest and the everlasting Hills,
Smiled in that joyful sunshine, . . they
partook
The universal blessing.
To this Isle,
Where his forefathers were to dust con-
sign'd,
Did Madoc come for natural piety,
Ordering a solemn service for their souls.
Therefore for this the Church that day
was drest:
For this the Abbot, in his alb arrayed,
At the high altar stood; for this infused,
Sweet incense from the waving thuri-
bule

Rose like a mist, and the grey brotherhood
Chaunted the solemn mass. And now on high
The mighty Mystery had been elevate,
And now around the graves the brethren
In long array proceed: each in his hand,
Tall as the staff of some wayfaring man,
Bears the brown taper, with their daylight flames
Dimming the cheerful day. Before the train
The Cross is borne, where, fashion'd to the life
In shape and size and ghastly colouring,
The aweful Image hangs. Next, in its shrine
Of gold and crystal, by the Abbot held,
The mighty Mystery came; on either hand
Three Monks uphold above, on silver wands,
The purple pall. With holy water next
A father went, therewith from hyssop branch
Sprinkling the graves; the while, with one accord,
The solemn psalm of mercy all entoned.

Pure was the faith of Madoc, though his mind
To all this pomp and solemn circumstance
Yielded a willing homage. But the place
Was holy; .. the dead air, which underneath
Those arches never felt the healthy sun,
Nor the free motion of the elements,
Chilly and damp, infused associate awe:
The sacred odours of the incense still
Floated; the daylight and the taper-flames
Commingled, dimming each, and each bedimm'd;
And as the slow procession paced along,
Still to their hymn, as if in symphony,
The regular foot-fall sounded: swelling now,
Their voices in one chorus, loud and deep,
Rung through the echoing aisles; and when it ceased,
The silence of that huge and sacred pile
Came on the heart. What wonder if the Prince
Yielded his homage there? the influences
Of that sweet autumn day made every sense
Alive to every impulse, .. and beneath
The stones whereon he stood, his ancestors
Were mouldering, dust to dust. Father! quoth he,
When now the rites were ended, .. far away
It hath been Madoc's lot to pitch his tent
On other shores; there, in a foreign land,
Far from my father's burial-place, must I
Be laid to rest; yet would I have my name
Be held with theirs in memory. I beseech you,
Have this a yearly rite for evermore,
As I will leave endowment for the same,
And let me be remember'd in the prayer.
The day shall be a holy day with me,
While I do live; they who come after me
Will hold it holy; it will be a bond
Of love and brotherhood, when all beside
Hath been dissolved; and though wide ocean rolls
Between my people and their mother Isle,
This shall be their communion. They shall send,
Link'd in one sacred feeling at one hour,
In the same language, the same prayer to Heaven,
And each remembering each in piety,
Pray for the other's welfare.
The old man
Partook that feeling, and some pious tears
Fell down his aged cheek. Kinsman and son,
It shall be so! said he; and thou shalt be
Remember'd in the prayer: nor then alone;
But till my sinking sands be quite run out,

This feeble voice shall, from its solitude,
Go up for thee to Heaven!
And now the bell
Rung out its cheerful summons; to the hall,
In seemly order, pass the brotherhood:
The serving-men wait with the ready ewer;
The place of honour to the Prince is given,
The Abbot's right-hand guest; the viands smoke,
The horn of ale goes round: and now, the cates
Removed, for days of festival reserved,
Comes choicer beverage, clary, hippocras,
And mead mature, that to the goblet's brim
Sparkles and sings and smiles. It was a day
Of that allowable and temperate mirth
Which leaves a joy for memory. Madoc told
His tale; and thus, with question and reply
And cheerful intercourse, from noon till nones
The brethren sate; and when the quire was done,
Renew'd their converse till the vesper bell.

But then the Porter call'd Prince Madoc out,
To speak with one, he said, who from the land
Had sought him and required his private ear.
Madoc in the moonlight met him: in his hand
The stripling held an oar, and on his back,
Like a broad shield, the coracle was hung.
Uncle! he cried, and with a gush of tears,
Sprung to the glad embrace.
O my brave boy!
Llewelyn! my dear boy! with stifled voice,
And interrupted utterance, Madoc cried;
And many times he clasp't him to his breast,
And many times drew back and gazed upon him,
Wiping the tears away which dimm'd the sight,
And told him how his heart had yearn'd for him,
As with a father's love, and bade him now
Forsake his lonely haunts and come with him,
And sail beyond the seas and share his fate.

No! by my God! the high-hearted youth replied,
It never shall be said Llewelyn left
His father's murderer on his father's throne!
I am the rightful king of this poor land. . .
Go thou, and wisely go; but I must stay,
That I may save my people. Tell me, Uncle,
The story of thy fortunes; I can hear it
Here in this lonely Isle, and at this hour, Securely.
Nay, quoth Madoc, tell me first
Where are thy haunts and coverts, and what hope
Thou hast to bear thee up? Why goest thou not
To thy dear father's friend in Powys-land,
There at Mathraval would Cyveilioc give
A kinsman's welcome; or at Dinevawr,
The guest of honour shouldst thou be with Rhys;
And he belike from David might obtain
Some recompence, though poor.
What recompence?
Exclaim'd Llewelyn; what hath he to give,
But life for life? and what have I to claim
But vengeance, and my father Yorwerth's throne?
If with aught short of this my soul could rest,
Would I not through the wide world follow thee,
Dear Uncle! and fare with thee, well or ill,

And show to thine old age the tenderness
My childhood found from thee ! . . What hopes I have
Let time display. Have thou no fear for me !
My bed is made within the ocean caves,
Of sea-weeds, bleach'd by many a sun and shower ;
I know the mountain dens, and every hold
And fastness of the forest ; and I know, . .
What troubles him by day and in his dreams, . .
There's many an honest heart in Gwyneth yet !
But tell me thine adventure ; that will be
A joy to think of in long winter nights,
When stormy billows make my lullaby.

So as they walk'd along the moonlight shore,
Did Madoc tell him all ; and still he strove,
By dwelling on that noble end and aim,
That of his actions was the heart and life,
To win him to his wish. It touch'd the youth ;
And when the Prince had ceased, he heaved a sigh,
Long-drawn and deep, as if regret were there.
No, no ! he cried, it must not be ! lo yonder
My native mountains, and how beautiful
They rest in the moonlight ! I was nurst among them ;
They saw my sports in childhood, they have seen
My sorrows, they have saved me in the hour
Of danger ; . . I have vow'd, that as they were
My cradle, they shall be my monument ! . .
But we shall meet again, and thou wilt find me,
When next thou visitest thy native Isle,
King in Aberfraw !
Never more, Llewelyn,
Madoc replied, shall I behold the shores
Of Britain, nor will ever tale of me
Reach the Green Isle again. With fearful care
I chuse my little company, and leave
No traces of our path, where Violence,
And bloody Zeal, and bloodier Avarice
Might find their blasting way.
If it be so, . .
And wise is thy resolve, the youth replied,
Thou wilt not know my fate ; . . but this be sure,
It shall not be inglorious. I have in me
A hope from Heaven. . . Give me thy blessing, Uncle !

Llewelyn, kneeling on the sand, embraced
His knees, with lifted head and streaming eyes
Listening. He rose, and fell on Madoc's neck,
And clasp'd him, with a silent agony, . .
Then launch'd his coracle, and took his way,
A lonely traveller on the moonlight sea.

XIV. LLAIAN

Now hath Prince Madoc left the holy Isle,
And homeward to Aberfraw, through the wilds
Of Arvon, bent his course. A little way
He turn'd aside, by natural impulses
Moved, to behold Cadwallon's lonely hut.
That lonely dwelling stood among the hills,
By a grey mountain-stream ; just elevate
Above the winter torrents did it stand,
Upon a craggy bank ; an orchard slope
Arose behind, and joyous was the scene
In early summer, when those antic trees
Shone with their blushing blossoms, and the flax
Twinkled beneath the breeze its liveliest green.
But save the flax-field and that orchard slope,

All else was desolate, and now it wore
One sober hue ; the narrow vale which wound
Among the hills was grey with rocks, that peer'd
Above its shallow soil ; the mountain side
Was loose with stones bestrewn, which oftentimes
Clattered adown the steep, beneath the foot
Of straggling goat dislodged ; or tower'd with crags,
One day, when winter's work hath loosen'd them,
To thunder down. All things assorted well
With that grey mountain hue ; the low stone lines,
Which scarcely seem'd to be the work of man,
The dwelling rudely rear'd with stones unhewn,
The stubble flax, the crooked apple-trees
Grey with their fleecy moss and mistletoe,
The white-bark'd birch now leafless, and the ash
Whose knotted roots were like the rifted rock,
Through which they forced their way. Adown the vale,
Broken by stones and o'er a stony bed,
Roll'd the loud mountain-stream.
When Madoc came,
A little child was sporting by the brook,
Floating the fallen leaves, that he might see them
Whirl in the eddy now, and now be driven
Down the descent, now on the smoother stream
Sail onward far away. But when he heard
The horse's tramp, he raised his head and watch'd
The Prince, who now dismounted and drew nigh.
The little boy still fix'd his eyes on him,
His bright blue eyes ; the wind just moved the curls
That cluster'd round his brow ; and so he stood,
His rosy cheeks still lifted up to gaze
In innocent wonder. Madoc took his hand,
And now had ask'd his name, and if he dwelt
There in the hut, when from that cottage-door
A woman came, who, seeing Madoc, stopt,
With such a fear, . . for she had cause for fear, . .
As when a bird returning to her nest,
Turns to a tree beside, if she behold
Some prying boy too near the dear retreat.
Howbeit, advancing soon, she now approach'd
The approaching Prince, and timidly enquired,
If on his wayfare he had lost the track,
That thither he had strayed. Not so, replied
The gentle Prince ; but having known this place,
And its old habitants, I came once more
To see the lonely hut among the hills.
Hath it been long your dwelling ?
Some few years
Here we have dwelt, quoth she, my child and I.
Will it please you enter, and partake such fare
As we can give ? Still timidly she spake,
But gathering courage from the gentle mien
Of him with whom she conversed. Madoc thank'd
Her friendly proffer, and toward the hut
They went, and in his arms he took the boy.
Who is his father ? said the Prince, but wish'd
The word unutter'd ; for thereat her cheek
Was flush'd with sudden heat and manifest pain ;
And she replied, He perish'd in the war.

They enter'd now her home ; she spread the board,
And set before her guest soft curds, and cheese
Of curd-like whiteness, with no foreign die

Adulterate, and what fruits the orchard gave,
And that old British beverage which the bees
Had toil'd to purvey all the summer long.
Three years, said Madoc, have gone by, since here
I found a timely welcome, overworn
With toil and sorrow and sickness: . . three long years!
'Twas when the battle had been waged hard by,
Upon the plain of Arvon.
She grew pale,
Suddenly pale; and seeing that he mark'd
The change, she told him, with a feeble voice,
That was the fatal fight which widow'd her.

O Christ, cried Madoc, 'tis a grief to think
How many a gallant Briton died that day,
In that accursed strife! I trod the field
When all was over, . . I beheld them heap'd . .
Ay, like ripe corn within the reaper's reach,
Strewn round the bloody spot where Hoel lay;
Brave as he was, himself cut down at last,
Oppress'd by numbers, gash'd with wounds, yet still
Clenching in his dead hand the broken sword! . .
But you are moved, . . you weep at what I tell.
Forgive me, that renewing my own grief,
I should have waken'd yours! Did you then know
Prince Hoel?
She replied, Oh no! my lot
Was humble, and my loss a humble one;
Yet was it all to me! They say, quoth she, . .
And, as she spake, she struggled to bring forth
With painful voice the interrupted words, . .
They say Prince Hoel's body was not found;
But you who saw him dead perchance can tell
Where he was laid, and by what friendly hand.

Even where he fell, said Madoc, is his grave;
For he who buried him was one whose faith
Reck'd not of boughten prayers, nor passing bell.
There is a hawthorn grows beside the place,
A solitary tree, nipt by the winds,
That it doth seem a fitting monument
For one untimely slain. . . But wherefore dwell we
On this ungrateful theme?
He took a harp
Which stood beside, and passing o'er its chords
Made music. At the touch the child drew nigh,
Pleased by the sound, and leant on Madoc's knee,
And bade him play again. So Madoc play'd,
For he had skill in minstrelsy, and raised
His voice, and sung Prince Hoel's lay of love.

I have harness'd thee, my Steed of shining grey,
And thou shalt bear me to the dear white walls.
I love the white walls by the verdant bank,
That glitter in the sun, where Bashfulness
Watches the silver sea-mew sail along.
I love that glittering dwelling, where we hear
The ever-sounding billows; for there dwells
The shapely Maiden, fair as the sea-spray,
Her cheek as lovely as the apple flower,
Or summer evening's glow. I pine for her;
In crowded halls my spirit is with her;

Through the long sleepless night I think
on her;
And happiness is gone, and health is lost,
And fled the flush of youth, and I am pale
As the pale ocean on a sunless morn.
I pine away for her, yet pity her,
That she should spurn so true a love as
mine.

He ceased, and laid his hand upon the
child, . .
And didst thou like the song? The child
replied, . .
Oh yes! it is a song my mother loves,
And so I love it too. He stoopt and
kiss'd
The boy, who still was leaning on his
knee,
Already grown familiar. I should like
To take thee with me, quoth the Ocean
Lord,
Over the seas.
Thou art Prince Madoc, then! . .
The mother cried, . . thou art indeed the
Prince!
That song . . that look . . and at his feet
she fell,
Crying . . Oh take him, Madoc! save
the child!
Thy brother Hoel's orphan!
Long it was
Ere that in either agitated heart
The tumult could subside. One while
the Prince
Gazed on the child, tracing intently
there
His brother's lines; and now he caught
him up,
And kiss'd his cheek, and gazed again
till all
Was dim and dizzy, . . then blest God,
and vow'd
That he should never need a father's
love.

At length when copious tears had now
relieved
Her burthen'd heart, and many a broken
speech
In tears had died away, O Prince, she
cried,
Long hath it been my dearest prayer to
heaven,
That I might see thee once, and to thy
love
Commit this friendless boy! For many
a time,
In phrase so fond did Hoel tell thy worth
That it hath waken'd misery in me
To think I could not as a sister claim
Thy love! and therefore was it that till
now
Thou knew'st me not; for I entreated
him
That he would never let thy virtuous eye
Look on my guilt, and make me feel my
shame.
Madoc, I did not dare to see thee then,
Thou wilt not scorn me now, . . for I
have now
Forgiven myself; and, while I here
perform'd
A mother's duty in this solitude,
Have felt myself forgiven.
With that she clasp'd
His hand, and bent her face on it and
wept.
Anon collecting she pursued, . . My name
Is Llaian: by the chance of war I fell
Into his power, when all my family
Had been cut off, all in one hour of blood.
He saved me from the ruffian's hand, he
sooth'd
With tenderest care my sorrow. . . You
can tell
How gentle he could be, and how his eyes,
So full of life and kindliness, could win
All hearts to love him. Madoc, I was
young;
I had no living friend; . . and when I
gave
This infant to his arms, when with such
joy
He view'd it o'er and o'er again, and
press'd
A father's kiss upon its cheek, and turn'd
To me, and made me feel more deeply
yet
A mother's deep delight, . . oh! I was
proud
To think my child in after years should
say,
Prince Hoel was his father!
Thus I dwelt
In the white dwelling by the verdant
bank, . .

Though not without my melancholy hours,
Happy. The joy it was when I beheld
His steed of shining grey come hastening on,
Across the yellow sand! . . Alas, ere long,
King Owen died. I need not tell thee, Madoc,
With what a deadly and forefeeling fear
I heard how Hoel seized his father's throne,
Nor with what ominous woe I welcomed him,
In that last little miserable hour
Ambition gave to love. I think his heart,
Brave as it was, misgave him. When I spake
Of David and my fears, he smiled upon me;
But 'twas a smile that came not from the heart, . .
A most ill-boding smile! . . O Madoc! Madoc!
You know not with what misery I saw
His parting steps, . . with what a dreadful hope
I watch'd for tidings! . . And at length it came, . .
Came like a thunderbolt! . . I sought the field!
O Madoc, there were many widows there,
But none with grief like mine! I look'd around;
I dragg'd aside the bodies of the dead,
To search for him, in vain; . . and then a hope
Seized me, which it was agony to lose!

Night came. I did not heed the storm of night;
But for the sake of this dear babe, I sought
Shelter in this lone hut: 'twas desolate;
And when my reason had return'd, I thought
That here the child of Hoel might be safe,
Till we could claim thy care. But thou, meantime,
Didst go to roam the Ocean; so I learnt
To bound my wishes here. The carkanet,
The embroider'd girdle, and what other gauds
Were once my vain adornments, soon were changed
For things of profit, goats and bees, and this,
The tuneful solace of my solitude.
Madoc, the harp is as a friend to me;
I sing to it the songs which Hoel loved,
And Hoel's own sweet lays; it comforts me,
And gives me joy in grief.
Often I grieved,
To think the son of Hoel should grow up
In this unworthy state of poverty;
Till Time, who softens all regrets, had worn
That vain regret away, and I became
Humbly resign'd to God's unerring will.
To him I look'd for healing, and he pour'd
His balm into my wounds. I never form'd
A prayer for more, . . and lo! the happiness
Which he hath, of his mercy, sent me now!

XV. THE EXCOMMUNICATION

On Madoc's docile courser Llaian sits,
Holding her joyful boy; the Prince beside
Paces afoot, and like a gentle Squire
Leads her loose bridle; from the saddle-bow
His shield and helmet hang, and with the lance,
Stafflike, he stay'd his steps. Before the sun
Had climb'd his southern eminence, they left
The mountain feet; and hard by Bangor now,
Travelling the plain before them they espy
A lordly cavalcade, for so it seem'd, 10
Of knights, with hawk in hand and hounds in leash,
Squires, pages, serving-men, and armed grooms,

And many a sumpter-beast and laden wain,
Far following in the rear. The bravery
Of glittering bauldricks and of high-plumed crests,
Embroider'd surcoats and emblazon'd shields,
And lances whose long streamers play'd aloft,
Made a rare pageant, as with sound of trump,
Tambour and cittern, proudly they went on;
And ever, at the foot-fall of their steeds,
The tinkling horse-bells, in rude symphony,
Accorded with the joy.
What have we here?
Quoth Madoc then to one who stood beside
The threshold of his osier-woven hut.
'Tis the great Saxon Prelate, he return'd,
Come hither for some end, I wist not what,
Only be sure no good! . . How stands the tide?
Said Madoc; can we pass? . . 'Tis even at the flood,
The man made answer, and the Monastery
Will have no hospitality to spare
For one of Wales to-day. Be ye content
To guest with us.
He took the Prince's sword:
The daughter of the house brought water then,
And wash'd the stranger's feet; the board was spread,
And o'er the bowl they communed of the days
Ere ever Saxon set his hateful foot
Upon the beautiful Isle.
As so they sate,
The bells of the Cathedral rung abroad
Unusual summons. What is this? exclaim'd
Prince Madoc: let us see! . . Forthwith they went,
He and his host, their way. They found the rites
Begun; the mitred Baldwin, in his hand
Holding a taper, at the altar stood.
Let him be cursed! . . were the words which first
Assail'd their ears, . . living and dead, in limb
And life, in soul and body, be he curst
Here and hereafter! Let him feel the curse
At every moment, and in every act,
By night and day, in waking and in sleep!
We cut him off from Christian fellowship;
Of Christian sacraments we deprive his soul;
Of Christian burial we deprive his corpse;
And when that carrion to the Fiends is left
In unprotected earth, thus let his soul
Be quench'd in hell!
He dash'd upon the floor
His taper down, and all the ministring Priests
Extinguish'd each his light, to consummate
The imprecation.
Whom is it ye curse,
Cried Madoc, with these horrors? They replied,
The contumacious Prince of Powys-land,
Cyveilioc.
What! quoth Madoc, and his eye
Grew terrible, . . Who is he that sets his foot
In Gwyneth, and with hellish forms like these
Dare outrage here Mathraval's noble Lord?
We wage no war with women nor with Priests;
But if there be a knight amid your train,
Who will stand forth, and speak before my face
Dishonour of the Prince of Powys-land,
Lo! here stand I, Prince Madoc, who will make
That slanderous wretch cry craven in the dust,
And eat his lying words!
Be temperate!
Quoth one of Baldwin's Priests, who, Briton born,

Had known Prince Madoc in his father's court;
It is our charge, throughout this Christian land,
To call upon all Christian men to join
The armies of the Lord, and take the cross;
That so, in battle with the Infidels,
The palm of victory or of martyrdom,
Glorious alike, may be their recompense.
This holy badge, whether in godless scorn,
Or for the natural blindness of his heart,
Cyveilioc hath refused; thereby incurring
The pain, which, not of our own impulse, we
Inflict upon his soul, but at the will
Of our most holy Father, from whose word
Lies no appeal on earth.
'Tis well for thee,
Intemperate Prince! said Baldwin, that our blood
Flows with a calmer action than thine own!
Thy brother David hath put on the cross,
To our most pious warfare piously
Pledging his kingly sword. Do thou the like,
And for this better object lay aside
Thine other enterprize, which, lest it rob
Judea of one single Christian arm,
We do condemn as sinful. Follow thou
The banner of the Church to Palestine;
So shalt thou expiate this rash offence,
Against the which we else should fulminate
Our ire, did we not see in charity,
And therefore rather pity than resent,
The rudeness of this barbarous land.
At that,
Scorn tempering wrath, yet anger sharpening scorn,
Madoc replied, Barbarians as we are,
Lord Prelate, we received the law of Christ
Many a long age before your pirate sires
Had left their forest dens; nor are we now
To learn that law from Norman or from Dane,
Saxon, Jute, Angle, or whatever name
Suit best your mongrel race! Ye think, perchance,
That like your own poor woman-hearted King,
We too in Gwyneth are to take the yoke
Of Rome upon our necks; . . but you may tell
Your Pope, that when I sail upon the seas,
I shall not strike a topsail for the breath
Of all his maledictions!
Saying thus,
He turn'd away, lest farther speech might call
Farther reply, and kindle farther wrath,
More easy to avoid than to allay.
Therefore he left the church; and soon his mind
To gentler mood was won, by social talk
And the sweet prattle of that blue-eyed boy,
Whom in his arms he fondled.
But when now
Evening had settled, to the door there came
One of the brethren of the Monastery,
Who called Prince Madoc forth. Apart they went,
And in the low suspicious voice of fear,
Though none was nigh, the Monk began.
Be calm,
Prince Madoc, while I speak, and patiently
Hear to the end! Thou know'st that, in his life,
Becket did excommunicate thy sire
For his unlawful marriage; but the King,
Feeling no sin in conscience, heeded not
The inefficient censure. Now, when Baldwin
Beheld his monument to-day, impell'd,
As we do think, by anger against thee,
He swore that, even as Owen in his deeds
Disown'd the Church when living, even so
The Church disown'd him dead, and that his corpse
No longer should be suffered to pollute
The Sanctuary . . Be patient, I beseech,
And hear me out. Gerald at this, who felt

A natural horror, sought, . . as best he knew
The haughty Primate's temper, . . to dissuade
By politic argument, and chiefly urged
The quick and fiery nature of our nation, . .
How at the sight of such indignity,
They would arise in arms, and limb from limb
Tear piecemeal him and all his company.
So far did this prevail, that he will now
Commit the deed in secret; and, this night,
Thy father's body from its resting place,
O Madoc! shall be torn, and cast aside
In some unhallow'd pit, with foul disgrace
And contumelious wrong.
Sayest thou to-night?
Quoth Madoc. . . Ay, at midnight, he replied,
Shall this impiety be perpetrated.
Therefore hath Gerald, for the reverence
He bears to Owen's royal memory,
Sent thee the tidings. Now be temperate
In thy just anger, Prince! and shed no blood.
Thou know'st how dearly the Plantagenet
Atones for Becket's death; and be thou sure,
Though thou thyself shouldst sail beyond the storm,
That it would fall on Britain.
While he spake,
Madoc was still; the feeling work'd too deep
For speech, or visible sign. At length he said,
What if amid their midnight sacrilege
I should appear among them?
It were well;
The Monk replied, if, at a sight like that,
Thou canst withhold thy hand.
Oh, fear me not!
Good and true friend, said Madoc. I am calm,
And calm as thou beholdest me will prove
In word and action. Quick I am to feel
Light ills, . . perhaps o'er-hasty: summer gnats,
Finding my cheek unguarded, may infix
Their skin-deep stings, to vex and irritate;
But if the wolf, or forest boar, be nigh,
I am awake to danger. Even so
Bear I a mind of steel and adamant
Against all greater wrongs. My heart hath now
Received its impulse; and thou shalt behold
How in this strange and hideous circumstance
I shall find profit. . . Only, my true friend,
Let me have entrance.
At the western porch,
Between the complines and the matinbell, . .
The Monk made answer: thou shalt find the door
Ready. Thy single person will suffice;
For Baldwin knows his danger, and the hour
Of guilt or fear convicts him, both alike
Opprobrious. Now, farewell!
Then Madoc took
His host aside, and in his private ear
Told him the purport, and wherein his help
Was needed. Night came on; the hearth was heapt,
The women went to rest. They twain, the while,
Sate at the board, and while the untasted bowl
Stood by them, watch'd the glass whose falling sands
Told out the weary hours. The hour is come;
Prince Madoc helm'd his head, and from his neck
He slung the bugle-horn; they took their shields,
And lance in hand went forth. And now arrived,
The bolts give back before them, and the door
Rolls on its heavy hinge.
Beside the grave
Stood Baldwin and the Prior, who, albeit
Cambrian himself, in fear and awe obey'd
The lordly Primate's will. They stood and watch'd

Their ministers perform the irreverent work.
And now with spade and mattock have they broken
Into the house of death, and now have they
From the stone coffin wrench'd the iron cramps,
When sudden interruption startled them,
And clad in complete mail from head to foot,
They saw the Prince come in. Their tapers gleam'd
Upon his visage, as he wore his helm
Open; and when in that pale countenance, . .
For the strong feeling blanch'd his cheek, . . they saw
His father's living lineaments, a fear
Like ague shook them. But anon that fit
Of scared imagination to the sense
Of other peril yielded, when they heard
Prince Madoc's dreadful voice. Stay! he exclaim'd,
As now they would have fled; . . stir not a man, . .
Or if I once put breath into this horn,
All Wales will hear, as if dead Owen call'd
For vengeance from that grave. Stir not a man,
Or not a man shall live! The doors are watch'd,
And ye are at my mercy!
But at that,
Baldwin from the altar seized the crucifix,
And held it forth to Madoc, and cried out,
He who strikes me, strikes Him; forbear, on pain
Of endless——
Peace! quoth Madoc, and profane not
The holy Cross, with those polluted hands
Of midnight sacrilege! . . Peace! I harm thee not, . .
Be wise, and thou art safe. . . For thee, thou know'st,
Prior, that if thy treason were divulged,
David would hang thee on thy steeple top,
To feed the steeple daws: Obey and live!
Go, bring fine linen and a coffer meet
To bear these relics; and do ye, meanwhile,
Proceed upon your work.
They at his word
Raised the stone cover, and display'd the dead,
In royal grave-clothes habited, his arms
Cross'd on the breast, with precious gums and spice
Fragrant, and incorruptibly preserved.
At Madoc's bidding, round the corpse they wrap
The linen web, fold within fold involved;
They laid it in the coffer, and with cloth
At head and foot filled every interval
And prest it down compact; they closed the lid,
And Madoc with his signet seal'd it thrice.
Then said he to his host, Bear thou at dawn
This treasure to the ships. My father's bones
Shall have their resting-place, where mine one day
May moulder by their side. He shall be free
In death, who living did so well maintain
His and his country's freedom. As for ye,
For your own safety, ye I ween will keep
My secret safe. So saying, he went his way.

XVI. DAVID

Now hath the Lord of Ocean once again
Set foot in Mona. Llaian there receives
Sisterly greeting from the royal maid,
Who, while she tempers to the public eye
Her welcome, safely to the boy indulged
In fond endearments of instinctive love.
When the first flow of joy was overpast,
How went the equipment on, the Prince enquired.
Nay, brother, quoth Goervyl, ask thou that

Of Urien ; . . it hath been his sole employ
Daily from cock-crow until even-song,
That he hath laid aside all other thoughts,
Forgetful even of me! She said and smiled
Playful reproach upon the good old man,
Who in such chiding as affection loves,
Dallying with terms of wrong, return'd rebuke.
There, Madoc, pointing to the shore, he cried,
There are they moor'd; six gallant barks, as trim
And worthy of the sea as ever yet
Gave canvass to the gale. The mariners
Flock to thy banner, and the call hath roused
Many a brave spirit. Soon as Spring shall serve,
There need be no delay. I should depart
Without one wish that lingers, could we bear
Ririd from hence, and break poor Rodri's chains,
Thy lion-hearted brother; . . and that boy,
If he were with us, Madoc! that dear boy
Llewelyn!
Sister, said the Prince at that,
How sped the Queen?
Oh, Madoc! she replied,
A hard and unrelenting heart hath he.
The gentle Emma told me she had fail'd,
And that was all she told; but in her eye
I could see sorrow struggling. She complains not,
And yet I know, in bitterness laments
The hour which brought her as a victim here.

Then I will seek the Monarch, Madoc cried;
And forth he went. Cold welcome David gave,
Such as might chill a suppliant; but the Prince
Fearless began. I found at Dinevawr
Our brother Ririd, and he made his suit
That he might follow me, a banish'd man.
He waits thine answer at the court of Rhys.
Now I beseech thee, David, say to him
His father's hall is open!
Then the King
Replied, I told thee, Madoc, thy request
Displeased me heretofore; I warn'd thee, too,
To shun the rebel; yet my messenger
Tells me, the guests at Dinevawr who sate
At board with Rhys and drank of his own cup
Were Madoc and Lord Ririd. . . Was this well,
This open disobedience to my will,
And my express command?
Madoc subdued
His rising wrath. If I should tell thee, Sire,
He answer'd, by what chance it so fell out,
I should of disobedience stand excused,
Even were it here a crime. Yet think again,
David, and let thy better mind prevail!
I am his surety here; he comes alone;
The strength of yonder armament is mine;
And when did I deceive thee? . . I did hope,
For natural love and public decency,
That ye would part in friendship . . let that pass!
He may remain and join me in the hour
Of embarkation. But for thine own sake
Cast off these vile suspicions, and the fear
That makes its danger! Call to mind, my brother,
The rampart that we were to Owen's throne!
Are there no moments when the thoughts and loves
Of other days return? . . Let Rodri loose!
Restore him to his birthright! . . Why wouldst thou
Hold him in chains, when benefits would bind
His noble spirit?
Leave me! cried the King;
Thou know'st the theme is hateful to my ear.
I have the mastery now, and idle words,

Madoc, shall never thrust me from the throne,
Which this right arm in battle hardly won.
There must he lie till nature set him free,
And so deliver both. Trespass no more!

A little yet bear with me, Madoc cried.
I leave this land for ever; let me first
Behold my brother Rodri, lest he think
My summer love be withered, and in wrath
Remember me hereafter.
Leave me, Madoc!
Speedily, ere indulgence grow a fault,
Exclaim'd the Monarch. Do not tempt my wrath;
Thou know'st me!
Ay! the Ocean Prince replied,
I know thee, David, and I pity thee,
Thou poor, suspicious, miserable man!
Friend hast thou none, except thy country's foe,
That hateful Saxon, he whose bloody hand
Pluck'd out thy brethren's eyes; and for thy kin,
Them hast thou made thy perilous enemies.
What if the Lion Rodri were abroad?
What if Llewelyn's banner were display'd?
The sword of England could not save thee then.
Frown not, and menace not! for what am I,
That I should fear thine anger? . . And with that
He turn'd indignant from the wrathful King.

XVII. THE DEPARTURE

Winter hath pass'd away; the vernal storms
Have spent their rage, the ships are stored, and now
To-morrow they depart. That day a Boy,
Weary and foot-sore, to Aberfraw came,
Who to Goervyl's chamber made his way,
And caught the hem of her garment, and exclaim'd,
A boon, . . a boon, . . dear Lady! Nor did he
Wait more reply than that encouragement,
Which her sweet eye and lovely smile bestow'd;
I am a poor, unhappy, orphan boy,
Born to fair promises and better hopes,
But now forlorn. Take me to be your page! . .
For blessed Mary's sake, refuse me not!
I have no friend on earth, nor hope but this.

The boy was fair; and though his eyes were swoln,
And cheek defiled with tears, and though his voice
Came choak'd by grief, yet to that earnest eye
And supplicating voice so musical,
It had not sure been easy to refuse
The boon he begg'd. I cannot grant thy suit,
Goervyl cried, but I can aid it, boy! . .
Go ask of Madoc! . . And herself arose,
And led him where her brother on the shore
That day the last embarkment oversaw.
Mervyn then took his mantle by the skirt,
And knelt and made his suit; she too began
To sue, but Madoc smiling on the Maid,
Won by the virtue of the countenance
Which look'd for favour, lightly gave the yes.

Where wert thou, Caradoc, when that fair boy
Told his false tale? for hadst thou heard the voice,
The gentle voice so musically sweet,
And seen that earnest eye, it would have heal'd
The wounded heart, and thou hadst voyaged on
The happiest man that ever yet forsook
His native country! He, on board the bark,
Leant o'er the vessel-side, and there he [stood

And gazed, almost unconscious that he gazed,
Toward yon distant mountains where she dwelt,
Senena, his beloved. Caradoc,
Senena, thy beloved, is at hand!
Her golden locks are clipt, and her blue eye
Is wandering through the throng in search of thee,
For whose dear sake she hath forsaken all.
You deem her false, that her frail constancy
Shrunk from her father's anger, that she lives
Another's victim bride; but she hath fled
From that unnatural anger; hath escaped
The unnatural union; she is on the shore,
Senena, blue-eyed maid, a seemly boy,
To share thy fortunes, to reward thy love,
And to the land of peace to follow thee,
Over the ocean waves.
Now all is done.
Stores, beeves, and flocks and water all aboard;
The dry East blows, and not a sign of change
Stains the clear firmament. The Sea-Lord sate
At the last banquet in his brother's court,
And heard the song: It told of Owen's fame,
When with his Normen and assembled force
Of Guienne and Gascony, and Anjou's strength,
The Fleming's aid and England's chosen troops,
Along the ascent of Berwyn, many a day
The Saxon vainly on his mountain foes
Denounced his wrath; for Mona's dragon sons
By wary patience baffled long his force,
Winning slow Famine to their aid, and help'd
By the angry Elements, and Sickness sent
From Heaven, and Fear that of its vigour robb'd
The healthy arm; .. then in quick enterprize
Fell on his weary and dishearten'd host,
Till with defeat and loss and obloquy
He fled with all his nations. Madoc gave
His spirit to the song; he felt the theme
In every pulse; the recollection came,
Revived and heighten'd to intenser pain,
That in Aberfraw, in his father's hall,
He never more should share the feast, nor hear
The echoing harp again! His heart was full;
And, yielding to its yearnings, in that mood
Of aweful feeling, he call'd forth the King,
And led him from the palace-porch, and stretch'd
His hand toward the ocean, and exclaim'd,
To-morrow over yon wide waves I go;
To-morrow, never to return, I leave
My native land! O David, O my brother,
Turn not impatiently a reckless ear
To that affectionate and natural voice
Which thou wilt hear no more! Release our brethren,
Recall the wanderers home, and link them to thee
By cordial confidence, by benefits
Which bless the benefactor. Be not thou
As is the black and melancholy yew
That strikes into the grave its baleful roots,
And prospers on the dead! .. The Saxon King, ..
Think not I wrong him now; .. an hour like this
Hath soften'd all my harsher feelings down;
Nor will I hate him for his sister's sake,
Thy gentle Queen, .. whom, that great God may bless,
And, blessing her, bless thee and our dear country,
Shall never be forgotten in my prayers;
But he is far away; and should there come
The evil hour upon thee, .. if thy kin,
Wearied by suffering, and driven desperate,

Should lift the sword, or young Llewelyn raise
His banner and demand his father's throne, . .
Were it not trusting to a broken reed,
To lean on England's aid ?. . I urge thee not
For answer now ; but sometimes, O my brother !
Sometimes recall to mind my parting words,
As 'twere the death-bed counsel of the friend
Who loved thee best !
The affection of his voice,
So mild and solemn, soften'd David's heart ;
He saw his brother's eyes, suffused with tears,
Shine in the moon-beam as he spake ; the King
Remember'd his departure, and he felt
Feelings, which long from his disnatured breast
Ambition had expell'd : he could almost
Have follow'd their strong impulse. From the shore,
Madoc with quick and agitated step
Had sought his home ; the monarch went his way,
Serious and slow, and laid him down that night
With painful recollections, and such thoughts,
As might, if Heaven had will'd it, have matured
To penitence and peace.
The day is come,
The adventurers in Saint Cybi's holy fane
Hear the last mass, and all assoil'd of sin
Partake the bread of Christian fellowship.
Then, as the Priest his benediction gave,
They knelt, in such an aweful stillness hush'd,
As with yet more oppression seem'd to load
The burthen'd heart. At times and half suppress,
Womanly sobs were heard, and manly cheeks
Were wet with silent tears. Now forth they go,
And at the portal of the Church unfurl
Prince Madoc's banner ; at that sight a shout
Burst from his followers, and the hills and rocks
Thrice echoed their acclaim.
There lie the ships,
Their sails all loose, their streamers rolling out
With sinuous flow and swell, like water-snakes,
Curling aloft ; the waves are gay with boats,
Pinnace and barge and coracle, . . the sea
Swarms like the shore with life. Oh what a sight
Of beauty for the spirit unconcern'd,
If heart there be which unconcern'd could view
A sight like this ! . . how yet more beautiful
For him, whose soul can feel and understand
The solemn import ! Yonder they embark,
Youth, beauty, valour, virtue, reverend age ;
Some led by love of noble enterprize,
Others, who, desperate of their country's weal,
Fly from the impending yoke ; all warm alike
With confidence and high heroic hope,
And all in one fraternal bond conjoin'd
By reverence to their Chief, the best beloved
That ever yet on hopeful enterprize
Led gallant army forth. He, even now
Lord of himself, by faith in God and love
To man subdues the feeling of this hour,
The bitterest of his being.
At this time,
Pale, and with feverish eye, the King came up,
And led him somewhat from the throng apart,
Saying, I sent at day-break to release
Rodri from prison, meaning that with thee

He should depart in peace ; but he was gone,
This very night he had escaped ! . . Perchance,
As I do hope, . . it was thy doing, Madoc ?
Is he aboard the fleet ?
I would he were !
Madoc replied ; with what a lighten'd heart
Then should I sail away ! Ririd is there
Alone . . alas ! that this was done so late !

Reproach me not ! half sullenly the King,
Answering, exclaim'd ; Madoc, reproach me not !
Thou know'st how hardly I attain'd the throne ;
And is it strange that I should guard with fear
The precious prize ? . . Now, . . when I would have taken
Thy counsel, . . be the evil on his head !
Blame me not now, my brother, lest sometimes
I call again to mind thy parting words
In sorrow !
God be with thee ! Madoc cried ;
And if at times the harshness of a heart,
Too prone to wrath, have wrong'd thee, let these tears
Efface all faults. I leave thee, O my brother,
With all a brother's feelings !
So he said,
And grasp'd, with trembling tenderness, his hand,
Then calm'd himself, and moved toward the boat.
Emma, though tears would have their way and sighs
Would swell, suppressing still all words of woe,
Follow'd Goervyl to the extremest shore.
But then as on the plank the Maid set foot,
Did Emma, staying her by the hand, pluck out
The crucifix, which next her heart she wore
In reverence to its relic, and she cried,
Yet ere we part change with me, dear Goervyl, . .
Dear sister, loved too well, or lost too soon ! . .
I shall betake me often to my prayers,
Never in them, Goervyl, of thy name
Unmindful ; . . thou too wilt remember me
Still in thy orisons ; . . but God forefend
That ever misery should make thee find
This Cross thy only comforter !
She said,
And kiss'd the holy pledge, as each to each
Transferr'd the mutual gift. Nor could the Maid
Answer, for agony, to that farewell ;
She held Queen Emma to her breast, and close
She clasp'd her with a strong convulsive sob,
Silently. Madoc too in silence went,
But prest a kiss on Emma's lips, and left
His tears upon her cheek. With dizzy eyes
Gazing she stood, nor saw the boat push off, . .
The dashing of the oars awaken'd her ;
She wipes her tears away, to view once more
Those dear familiar faces ; . . they are dim
In the distance ; never shall her waking eye
Behold them, till the hour of happiness,
When death hath made her pure for perfect bliss !

Two hearts alone of all that company,
Of all the thousands who beheld the scene,
Partook unmingled joy. Dumb with delight,
Young Hoel views the ships and feels the boat
Rock on the heaving waves ; and Llaian felt
Comfort, . . though sad, yet comfort, . . that for her
No eye was left to weep, nor heart to mourn.

Hark! 'tis the mariners with voice attuned
Timing their toil! and now with gentle gales,
Slow from the holy haven they depart.

XVIII. RODRI

Now hath the evening settled; the broad Moon
Rolls through the rifted clouds. With gentle gales
Slowly they glide along, when they behold
A boat with press of sail and stress of oar
Speed forward to the fleet; and now, arrived
Beside the Chieftain's vessel, one enquires
If Madoc be aboard? the answer given,
Swift he ascended up the lofty side.
With joyful wonder did the Ocean Lord
Again behold Llewelyn; but he gazed
Doubtfully on his comrade's countenance, . .
A meagre man, severe of brow, his eye
Stern. Thou dost view me, Madoc, he exclaim'd,
As 'twere a stranger's face. I marvel not!
The long afflictions of my prison house
Have changed me.
Rodri! cried the Prince, and fell
Upon his neck; . . last night, subdued at length
By my solicitations, did the King
Send to deliver thee, that thou shouldst share
My happy enterprize; . . and thou art come,
Even to my wish!
Nay, Madoc, nay, not so!
He answered, with a stern and bitter smile;
This gallant boy hath given me liberty,
And I will pay him with his father's throne.
Ay, by my father's soul! . . Last night we fled
The house of bondage, and in the sea-caves
By day we lurk'd securely. Here I come,
Only to see thee once before I die,
And say farewell, . . dear brother!
Would to God
This purpose could be changed! the Sea Lord cried;
But thou art roused by wrongs, and who shall tame
That lion heart? . . This only, if your lot
Fall favourable, will I beseech of ye,
That to his Queen, the fair Plantagenet,
All honourable humanity ye show,
For her own virtue, and in gratitude,
As she hath pleaded for you, and hath urged
Her husband on your part, till it hath turn'd
His wrath upon herself. Oh! deal ye by her
As by your dearest sister in distress,
For even so dear is she to Madoc's heart:
And now I know she from Aberfraw's tower
Watcheth these specks upon the moonlight sea,
And weeps for my departure, and for me
Sends up her prayers to Heaven, nor thinks that now
I must make mine to man in her behalf!

Quoth Rodri, Rest assured for her. I swear,
By our dead mother, so to deal with her
As thou thyself wouldst dictate, as herself
Shall wish.
The tears fell fast from Madoc's eyes:
O Britain! O my country! he exclaim'd,
For ever thus by civil strife convulsed,
Thy children's blood flowing to satisfy
Thy children's rage, how wilt thou still support
The struggle with the Saxon?
Rodri cried,
Our strife shall not be long. Mona will rise
With joy, to welcome me her rightful Lord;

And woe be to the King who rules by fear,
When danger comes against him! Fear not thou
For Britain! quoth Llewelyn; for not yet
The country of our fathers shall resign
Her name among the nations. Though her Sun
Slope from his eminence, the voice of man
May yet arrest him on his downward way.
My dreams by day, my visions in the night,
Are of her welfare. I shall mount the throne, . .
Yes, Madoc! and the Bard of years to come,
Who harps of Arthur's and of Owen's deeds,
Shall with the Worthies of his country rank
Llewelyn's name. Dear Uncle, fare thee well! . .
And I almost could wish I had been born
Of humbler lot, that I might follow thee,
Companion of this noble enterprize.
Think of Llewelyn often, who will oft
Remember thee in love!
For the last time
He press'd his Uncle's hand, and Rodri gave
The last farewell; then went the twain their way.

So over ocean through the moonlight waves
Prince Madoc sail'd with all his company.
No nobler crew fill'd that heroic bark
Which bore the first adventurers of the deep
To seek the Golden Fleece on barbarous shores:
Nor richlier fraught did that illustrious fleet
Home to the Happy Island hold its way,
When Amadis with his prime chivalry,
He of all chivalry himself the flower,
Came from the rescue, proud of Roman spoils,
And Oriana, freed from Roman thrall.

MADOC IN AZTLAN: PART II.

I. THE RETURN TO AZTLAN

Now go your way, ye gallant company,
God and good Angels guard ye as ye go!
Blow fairly, Winds of Heaven! Ye Ocean Waves,
Swell not in anger to that fated fleet!
For not of conquest greedy, nor of gold,
Seek they the distant world. . . Blow fairly, Winds!
Waft, Waves of Ocean, well your blessed load!

Fair blew the Winds, and safely did the Waves
Bear that beloved charge. It were a tale
Would rouse adventurous courage in a boy,
Making him long to be a mariner
That he might rove the main, if I should tell
How pleasantly for many a summer-day,
Over the sunny sea with wind at will,
Prince Madoc sail'd; and of those happy Isles,
Which had he seen ere that appointed storm
Drove southward his slope course, there he had pitch'd
His tent, and blest his lot that it had fallen
In land so fair; and human blood had reek'd
Daily on Aztlan's devilish altars still.
But other doom was his, more arduous toil
Yet to achieve, worse danger to endure,

Worse evil to be quell'd, and higher good
Which passeth not away educed from ill;
Whereof all unforeseeing, yet for all
Prepared at heart, he over ocean sails,
Wafted by gentle winds o'er gentle waves,
As if the elements combined to serve
The perfect Prince, by God and man beloved.
And now how joyfully he views the land,
Skirting like morning clouds the dusky sea;
With what a searching eye recalls to mind
Foreland and creek and cape; how happy now
Up the great river bends at last his way!

No watchman had been station'd on the height
To seek his sails, . . for with Cadwallon's hope
Too much of doubt was blended and of fear:
Yet thitherward whene'er he walked abroad
His face, as if instinctively, was turn'd;
And duly morn and eve Lincoya there,
As though religion led his duteous feet,
Went up to gaze. He on a staff had scored
The promised moons and days; and many a time
Counting again its often-told account,
So to beguile impatience, day by day
Smooth'd off with more delight the daily notch.
But now that the appointed time was nigh,
Did that perpetual presence of his hope
Haunt him, and mingle with his sleep, and mar
The natural rest, and trouble him by day,
That all his pleasure was at earliest light
To take his station, and at latest eve,
If he might see the sails where far away
Through wide savannahs roll'd the silver stream.
Oh then with what a sudden start his blood
Flow'd from its quicken'd spring, when far away
He spied the glittering topsails! For a while
Distrustful of that happy sight, till now
Slowly he sees them rise, and wind along
Through wide savannahs up the silver stream.
Then with a breathless speed he flies to spread
The joy; and with Cadwallon now descends,
And drives adown the tide the light canoe.
And mounts the vessel-side, and once again
Falls at the Ocean Lord's beloved feet.

First of the general weal did Madoc ask;
Cadwallon answer'd, All as yet is well,
And, by this seasonable aid secured,
Will well remain. . . Thy father? quoth the Prince.
Even so, replied Cadwallon, as that eye
Of hesitation augurs, . . fallen asleep.
The good old man remember'd thee in death,
And bless'd thee ere he died.
By this the shores
And heights were throng'd; from hill to hill, from rock
To rock, the shouts of welcome rung around.
Forward they press to view the man beloved,
Britons and Hoamen with one common joy
Hailing their common friend. Happy that day
Was he who heard his name from Madoc's voice;
Happy who met the greeting of his eye;
Yea happy he who shared the general smile,
Amid the unacknowledged multitude.

Caermadoc, . . by that name Cadwallon's love
Call'd it in memory of the absent Prince, . .
Stood in a mountain vale, by rocks and heights,

A natural bulwark, girt. A rocky stream
Which from the fells came down there spread itself
Into a quiet lake, to compass which
Had been a two hours' pleasurable toil;
And he, who from a well-strung bow could send
His shaft across, had needs a sinewy arm,
And might from many an archer far and near
Have borne away the bell. Here had the Chief
Chosen his abiding place, for strength preferr'd,
Where vainly might an host in equal arms
Attempt the difficult entrance; and for all
That could delight the eye and heart of man;
Whate'er of beauty or of usefulness
Heart could desire, or eye behold, being here.
What he had found an idle wilderness
Now gave rich increase to the husbandmen,
For Heaven had blest their labour. Flourishing
He left the happy vale; and now he saw
More fields reclaim'd, more habitations rear'd,
More harvests rising round. The reptile race,
And every beast of rapine, had retired
From man's asserted empire; and the sound
Of axe and dashing oar, and fisher's net,
And song beguiling toil, and pastoral pipe,
Were heard, where late the solitary hills
Gave only to the mountain-cataract
Their wild response.
Here, Urien, cried the Prince,
These craggy heights and overhanging groves
Will make thee think of Gwyneth. And this hut,
Rejoin'd Cadwallon, with its roof of reeds,
Goervyl, is our palace: it was built
With lighter labour than Aberfraw's towers;
Yet, Lady, safer are its wattled sides
Than Mona's kingly walls. . . Like Gwyneth, said he?
Oh no! we neighbour nearer to the Sun,
And with a more benignant eye the Lord
Of Light beholds us here.
So thus did they
Cheerfully welcome to their new abode
These, who, albeit aweary of their way,
And glad to reach at length the place of rest,
Felt their hearts overburthen'd, and their eyes
Ready to overflow. Yet not the less
The buzz of busy joy was heard around,
Where every dwelling had its guest, and all
Gave the long eve to hospitable mirth.

II. THE TIDINGS

But when the Lord of Ocean from the stir
And tumult was retired, Cadwallon then
Thus render'd his account.
When we had quell'd
The strength of Aztlan, we should have thrown down
Her altars, cast her Idols to the fire,
And on the ruins of her fanes accurst
Planted the Cross triumphant. Vain it is
To sow the seed where noxious weeds and briars
Must choke it in the growth.
Yet I had hope
The purer influence of exampled good
Might to the saving knowledge of the truth
Lead this bedarken'd race; and when thy ship
Fell down the stream to distant Britain bound,
All promised well. The strangers' God had proved
Mightier in war; and Aztlan could not choose
But see, nor seeing could she fail to love,

The freedom of his service. Few were now
The offerings at her altars, few the youths
And virgins to the temple-toils devote.
Therefore the Priests combined to save their craft;
And soon the rumour ran of evil signs
And tokens; in the temple had been heard
Wailings and loud lament; the eternal fire
Gave dismally a dim and doubtful flame;
And from the censer, which at morn should steam
Sweet odours to the sun, a fetid cloud
Black and portentous rose. And now no Priest
Approach'd our dwelling. Even the friendly Prince
Yuhidthiton was at Caermadoc now
Rarely a guest; and if that tried good-will
Which once he bore us did at times appear,
A sullen gloom and silence like remorse
Followed the imagined crime.
But I the while
Reck'd not the brooding of the storm; for then
My father to the grave was hastening down.
Patiently did the pious man endure,
In faith anticipating blessedness,
Already more than man in those sad hours
When man is meanest. I sate by his side,
And pray'd with him and talk'd with him of death
And life to come. O Madoc! those were hours
Which even in anguish gave my soul a joy:
I think of them in solitude, and feel
The comfort of my faith.
But when that time
Of bitterness was past and I return'd
To daily duties, no suspicious sign
Betoken'd ill; the Priests among us came
As heretofore, and I their intercourse
Encouraged as I could, suspecting nought,
Nor conscious of the subtle-minded men
I dealt with, how inveterate in revenge,
How patient in deceit. Lincoya first
Forewarn'd me of the danger. He, thou know'st,
Had from the death of sacrifice escaped,
And lived a slave among a distant tribe,
When seeing us he felt a hope, that we,
Lords as he deem'd us of the Elements,
Might pity his poor countrymen opprest,
And free them from their bondage. Didst thou hear
How from yon bloody altars he was saved?
For in the eternal chain his fate and ours
Were link'd together then.
The Prince replied,
I did but hear a broken tale. Tell on!

Among the Gods of yon unhappy race,
Tezcalipoca as the chief they rank,
Or with the chief co-equal; Maker he,
And Master of created things esteem'd.
He sits upon a throne of trophied skulls,
Hideous and huge; a shield is on his arm,
And with his black right hand he lifts, as though
In wrath, the menacing spear. His festival,
Of all this wicked nation's wicked rites,
With most solemnity and circumstance
And pomp of hellish piety, is held.
From all whom evil fortune hath subdued
To their inhuman thraldom, they select
Him whom they judge, for comely countenance
And shapely form and all good natural gifts,
Worthiest to be the victim; and for this
Was young Lincoya chosen, being in truth
The flower of all his nation. For twelve months,
Their custom is, that this appointed youth
Be as the Idol's living image held.
Garb'd therefore like the Demon Deity,
Whene'er he goes abroad, an antic train

With music and with dance attend his way ;
The crowd before him fall and worship him ;
And those infernal Priests who guard him then,
To be their victim and their feast at last,
At morning and at evening incense him,
And mock him with knee-reverence.
Twenty days
Before the bloody festival arrive,
As 'twere to make the wretch in love with life,
Four maids, the loveliest of the land, are given
In spousals. With Lincoya all these rites
Duly were kept ; and at the stated time,
Four maids, the loveliest of the land, were his.
Of these was one, whom even at that hour
He learnt to love, so excellently good
Was she ; and she loved him and pitied him.
She is the daughter of an aged Priest ;
I oftentimes have seen her ; and in truth,
Compared with Britain's maids so beautiful,
Or with the dark-eyed daughters of the South,
She would be lovely still. Her cotton vest
Falls to the knee, and leaves her olive arms
Bare in their beauty ; loose, luxuriant, long,
Flow the black tresses of her glossy hair ;
Mild is her eye's jet lustre ; and her voice ! . .
A soul which harbour'd evil never breathed
Such winning tones.
Thou know'st how manfully
These tribes, as if insensible to pain,
Welcome their death in battle, or in bonds
Defy their torturers. To Lincoya's mind
Long preparation now had made his fate
Familiar ; and, he says, the thought of death
Broke not his sleep, nor mingled with his dreams,
Till Coätel was his. But then it woke ; . .
It hung, . . it prest upon him like a weight
On one who scarce can struggle with the waves ;
And when her soul was full of tenderness,
That thought recurring to her, she would rest
Her cheek on his and weep.
The day drew nigh ;
And now the eve of sacrifice was come. . .
What will not woman, gentle woman, dare,
When strong affection stirs her spirit up ? . .
She gather'd herbs, which, like our poppy, bear
The seed of sleep, and with the temple food
Mingled their power ; herself partook the food,
So best to lull suspicion ; and the youth,
Instructed well, when all were laid asleep,
Fled far away.
After our conquering arms
Had freed the Hoamen from their wretched yoke,
Lincoya needed but his Coätel
To fill his sum of earthly happiness.
Her to the temple had her father's vow
Awhile devoted, and some moons were still
To pass away, ere yet she might become
A sojourner with us, Lincoya's wife,
When from the Paba's wiles his watchful mind
Foreboded ill. He bade me take good heed,
And fear the sudden kindness of a foe.
I started at his words ; . . these artful men,
Hostile at heart, as well we knew they were,
These were lip-lavish of their friendship now,
And courted confidence, while our tried friend
Yuhidthiton, estranged, a seldom guest,

Sullen and joyless, seem'd to bear at heart
Something that rankled there. These things were strange;
The omens too had ceased; . . we heard no more
Of twilight voices, nor the unholy cloud
Steam'd from the morning incense. Why was this?

Young Malinal had from the hour of peace
Been our in-dweller, studious to attain
Our language and our arts. To him I told
My doubts, assured of his true love and truth;
For he had learnt to understand and feel
Our holy faith, and tended like a son
Cynetha's drooping age, and shared with me
His dying benediction. He, thus long
Intent on better things, had been estranged
From Aztlan and her councils; but at this
He judged it for her welfare and for ours
Now to resume his rank; . . belike his voice
Might yet be heard, or, if the worst befel,
His timely warning save us from the snare.

But in their secret councils Malinal
No longer bore a part: the Chiefs and King
Yielding blind reverence to the Pabas now,
Deluded or dismay'd. He sent to say
Some treachery was design'd, and bade me charge
His brother with the crime. On that same day,
Lincoya came from Aztlan; he had found
Coätel labouring with a wretchedness
She did not seek to hide; and when the youth
Reveal'd his fear, he saw her tawny cheek
Whiten, and round his neck she clung and wept.
She told him something dreadful was at hand,
She knew not what: That, in the dead of night,
Coänocotzin at Mexitli's shrine
Had stood with all his nobles; human blood
Had then been offer'd up, and secret vows
Vow'd with mysterious horror: That but late,
When to her father of the days to come
She spake, and of Lincoya and her lot
Among the strangers, he had frown'd, and strove
Beneath dissembled anger to conceal
Visible grief. She knew not what to fear,
But something dreadful surely was at hand,
And she was wretched.
When I heard these things,
Yuhidthiton and the Priest Helhua
Were in our dwellings. Them I call'd apart. . .
There should be peace between us, I began;
Why is it otherwise?
The Priest replied,
Is there not peace, Cadwallon? Seek we not
More frequent and more friendly intercourse,
Even we, the servants of our Country-Gods,
Whose worship ye have changed, and for whose sake
We were and would have been your enemies?
But as those Gods have otherwise ordain'd,
Do we obey. Why therefore is this doubt?

The Power who led us hither, I replied,
Over the world of waters, who hath saved,
And who will save his people, warns me now.
Then on Yuhidthiton I fix'd my eye.

Danger is near! I cried; I know it near!
It comes from Aztlan.
His disorder'd cheek,
And the forced and steady boldness of his eye,
Which in defiance met the look it fear'd,
Confess'd the crime. I saw his inward shame;
Yet with a pride like angry innocence
Did he make answer, I am in your hands,
And you believe me treacherous! . . Kill me now!

Not so, Yuhidthiton! not so! quoth I;
You were the Strangers' friend, and yet again
That wisdom may return. We are not changed; . .
Lovers of peace, we know, when danger comes,
To make the evil on the guilty head
Fall heavily and sure! With our good arms,
And our good cause, and that Almighty One,
We are enough, had we no other aid,
We of Caermadoc here, to put to shame
Aztlan, with all her strength and all her wiles.
But even now is Madoc on the seas;
He leads our brethren here; and should he find
That Aztlan hath been false, . . oh! hope not then,
By force or fraud, to baffle or elude
Inevitable vengeance! While ye may,
Look to your choice; for we are friends or foes,
Even to your own desert.
So saying, I left
The astonish'd men, whose unprovided minds
Fail'd them; nor did they aim at answer more,
But homeward went their way. Nor knew I then, . .
For this was but a thing of yesterday, . .
How near the help I boasted. Now, I trust,
Thy coming shall discomfit all their wiles.

III. NEOLIN

Not yet at rest, my Sister! quoth the Prince,
As at her dwelling-door he saw the Maid
Sit gazing on that lovely moonlight scene: . .
To bed, Goervyl. Dearest, what hast thou
To keep thee wakeful here at this late hour,
When even I shall bid a truce to thought,
And lay me down in peace? . . Good night, Goervyl!
Dear sister mine, . . my own dear mother's child!

She rose, and bending on with lifted arms,
Met the fond kiss, obedient then withdrew.
Yet could not he so lightly as he ween'd
Lay wakeful thoughts aside; for he foresaw
Long strife and hard adventure to achieve,
And forms of danger vague disturb'd his dreams.

Early at morn the colonists arose;
Some pitch the tent-pole, and pin down the lines
That stretch the o'er-awning canvass; to the wood
Others with saw and axe and bill for stakes,
And undergrowth to weave the wicker walls;
These to the ships, with whom Cadwallon sends
The Elk and Bison, broken to the yoke.

Ere noon Erillyab and her son arrived,
To greet the Chief. She wore no longer now
The lank loose locks of careless widowhood;
Her braided tresses round her brow were bound,
Bedeck'd with tufts of grey and silvery plumes

Pluck'd from the eagle's pennons. She with eye
And countenance which spake no feign'd delight,
Welcomed her great deliverer. But her son
Had Nature character'd so legibly,
That when his tongue told fair his face bewray'd
The lurking falsehood; sullen, slow of speech,
Savage, down-looking, dark, that at his words
Of welcome, Madoc in his heart conceived
Instinctive enmity.
In a happy hour
Did the Great Spirit, said Erillyab,
Give bidding to the Winds to speed thee here!
For this I made my prayer; and when He sent
For the Beloved Teacher, to restore him
Eyesight and youth, of him I then besought,
As he had been thy friend and ours on earth,
That he would intercede... Brother, we know
That the Great Spirit loves thee; He hath blest
Thy going and thy coming, and thy friends
Have prosper'd for thy sake; and now when first
The Powers of Evil do begin to work,
Lo! thou art here!.. Brother, we have obeyed
Thy will, and the Beloved Teacher's words
Have been our law; but now the Evil Ones
Cry out for blood, and say they are athirst,
And threaten vengeance. I have brought the Priest
To whom they spake in darkness... Thou art wise,
And the Great Spirit will enlighten thee;..
We know not what to answer... Tell thy tale,
Neolin!

Hereat did Madoc fix upon him
A searching eye; but he, no whit abash'd,
Began with firm effrontery his speech.
The Feast of the Departed is at hand,
And I, in preparation, on the Field
Of the Spirit pass'd the night. It came to me
In darkness, after midnight, when the moon
Was gone, and all the stars were blotted out;
It gather'd round me, with a noise of storms,
And enter'd into me, and I could feel
It was the Snake-God roll'd and writhed within;
And I too with the inward agony,
Roll'd like a snake and writhed. Give! give! he cried:
I thirst!.. His voice was in me, and it burnt
Like fire, and all my flesh and bones were shaken;
Till, with a throe which seem'd to rend my joints
Asunder, he pass'd forth, and I was left
Speechless and motionless, gasping for breath.

Then Madoc, turning to Ayayaca,
Enquired, who is the man?.. The good old Priest
Replied, he hath attended from his youth
The Snake-God's temple, and received for him
His offerings, and perform'd his sacrifice,
Till the Beloved Teacher made us leave
The wicked way.
Hear me! quoth Neolin,
With antic gesture and loud vehemence;
Before this generation, and before
These ancient forests,.. yea, before yon lake
Was hollow'd out, or one snow-feather fell
On yonder mountain-top, now never bare,..
Before these things I was,.. where, or from whence,
I know not,.. who can tell? But then I was,

And in the shadow of the Spirit stood ;
And I beheld the Spirit, and in him
Saw all things, even as they were to be ;
And I held commune with him, not of words,
But thought with thought. Then was it given me
That I should choose my station when my hour
Of mortal birth was come, . . hunter, or chief,
Or to be mightiest in the work of war,
Or in the shadow of the Spirit live,
And He in me. According to my choice,
For ever, overshadow'd by its power,
I walk among mankind. At times I feel not
The burthen of his presence ; then am I
Like other men ; but when the season comes,
Or if I seek the visitation, then
He fills me, and my soul is carried on,
And then do I forelive the race of men,
So that the things that will be, are to me
Past.
Amalahta lifted then his eyes
A moment ; . . It is true, he cried ; we know
He is a gifted man, and wise beyond
The reach of mortal powers. Ayayaca
Hath also heard the warning.
As I slept,
Replied the aged Priest, upon the Field
Of the Spirit, a loud voice awaken'd me,
Crying, I thirst ! Give, . . give ! or I will take !
And then I heard a hiss, as if a snake
Were threatening at my side. . . But saw you nothing ?
Quoth Madoc. . . Nothing ; for the night was dark.
And felt you nothing ? said the Ocean Prince.
He answered, Nothing ; only sudden fear. . .
No inward struggle, like possession ? . . None.
I thought of the Beloved Teacher's words,
And cross'd myself, and then he had no power.
Thou hast slept heretofore upon the Field,
Said Madoc ; didst thou never witness voice,
Or ominous sound ? Ayayaca replied,
Certes the Field is holy ! it receives,
All the year long, the operative power
Which falleth from the sky, or from below
Pervades the earth ; no harvest groweth there,
Nor tree, nor bush, nor herb, is left to spring ;
But there the virtue of the elements
Is gathered, till the circle of the months
Be full ; then, when the Priest, by mystic rites,
Long vigils, and long abstinence prepared,
Goeth there to pass the appointed night alone,
The whole collected influence enters him.
Doubt not but I have felt strange impulses
On that mysterious Field, and in my dreams
Been visited ; and have heard sounds in the air,
I knew not what; . . but words articulate
Never till now. It was the Wicked One !
He wanted blood.
Who says the Wicked One ?
It was our fathers' God ! cried Neolin . .
Sons of the Ocean, why should we forsake
The worship of our fathers ? Ye obey
The White-Man's Maker ; but to us was given
A different skin and speech and land and law.
The Snake-God understands the Red-Man's prayer,
And knows his wants and loves him. Shame be to us,
That since the Stranger here set foot among us,
We have let his lips be dry !
Enough ! replied
Madoc, who at Cadwallon's look repress'd
His answering anger. We will hold a talk

Of this hereafter. Be ye sure, meantime,
That the Great Spirit will from Evil Powers
Protect his people. This, too, be ye sure,
That every deed of darkness shall be brought
To light, . . and woe be to the lying lips!

IV. AMALAHTA.

Soon as the coming of the fleet was known,
Had Queen Erillyab sent her hunters forth.
They from the forest now arrive, with store
Of venison; fires are built before the tents,
Where Llaian and Goervyl for their guests
Direct the feast; and now the ready board
With grateful odour steams. But while they sate
At meat, did Amalahta many a time
Lift his slow eye askance, and eagerly
Gaze on Goervyl's beauty; for whate'er
In man he might have thought deformed or strange
Seemed beautiful in her, . . her golden curls,
Bright eyes of heavenly blue, and that clear skin,
Blooming with health and youth and happiness.
He, lightly yielding to the impulse, bent
His head aside, and to Erillyab spake;
Mother, said he, tell them to give to me
That woman for my wife, that we may be
Brethren and friends. She, in the same low tone,
Rebuked him, in her heart too well aware
How far unworthy he. Abash'd thereby,
As he not yet had wholly shaken off
Habitual reverence, he sate sullenly,
Brooding in silence his imagined wiles,
By sight of beauty made more apt for ill;
For he himself being evil, good in him
Work'd evil.
And now Madoc, pouring forth
The ripe metheglin, to Erillyab gave
The horn of silver brim. Taste, Queen and friend,
Said he, what from our father-land we bring,
The old beloved beverage. Sparingly
Drink, for it hath a strength to stir the brain,
And trouble reason, if intemperate lips
Abuse its potency. She took the horn,
And sipt with wary wisdom. . . Canst thou teach us
The art of this rare beverage? quoth the Queen,
Or is the gift reserved for ye alone,
By the Great Spirit, who hath favour'd ye
In all things above us? . . The Chief replied,
All that we know of useful and of good
Ye also shall be taught, that we may be
One people. While he spake, Erillyab pass'd
The horn to Amalahta. Sparingly!
Madoc exclaim'd; but when the savage felt
The luscious flavour, and the poignant life,
He heeded nought beyond the immediate joy.
Deep did he drink, and still with clenching hands
Struggled, when from his lips, unsatisfied,
Erillyab pluck'd the horn with sharp reproof,
Chiding his stubborn wilfulness. Ere long
The generous liquor flush'd him: he could feel
His blood play faster, and the joyful dance
Of animal life within him. Bolder grown,
He at Goervyl lifts no longer now
The secret glance, but gloats with greedy eye;
Till, at the long and loathsome look abash'd,

She rose, and nearer to her brother drew,
On light pretence of speech, being half in fear.
But he, regardless of Erillyab now,
To Madoc cried aloud, Thou art a King,
And I a King! . . Give me thy sister there,
To be my wife, and then we will be friends,
And reign together.
Let me answer him,
Madoc! Cadwallon cried. I better know
Their language, and will set aside all hope,
Yet not incense the savage. . . A great thing,
Prince Amalahta, hast thou ask'd! said he.
Nor is it in Lord Madoc's power to give
Or to withhold; for marriage is with us
The holiest ordinance of God, whereon
The bliss or bane of human life depends.
Love must be won by love, and heart to heart
Link'd in mysterious sympathy, before
We pledge the marriage-vow; and some there are
Who hold that, e'er we enter into life,
Soul hath with soul been mated, each for each
Especially ordain'd. Prince Madoc's will
Avails not, therefore, where this secret bond
Hath not been framed in Heaven.
The skilful speech
Which, with wild faith and reason, thus confirm'd
Yet temper'd the denial, for a while
Silenced him, and he sate in moody dreams
Of snares and violence. Soon a drunken thirst,
And longing for the luscious beverage,
Drove those dark thoughts aside. More drink! quoth he.
Give me the drink! . . Madoc again repeats
His warning, and again with look and voice
Erillyab chides; but he of all restraint
Impatient, cries aloud, Am I a child?
Give! give! or I will take! . . Perchance ye think
I and my God alike cry out in vain!
But ye shall find us true!
Give him the horn!
Cadwallon answer'd; there will come upon him
Folly and sleep, and then an after pain,
Which may bring wisdom with it, if he learn
Therefrom to heed our warning. . . As thou say'st,
No child art thou! . . the choice is in thy hand; . .
Drink, if thou wilt, and suffer, and in pain
Remember us.
He clench'd the horn, and swill'd
The sweet intoxication copious down.
So bad grew worse. The potent draught provoked
Fierce pride and savage insolence. Ay! now
It seems that I have taught ye who I am!
The inebriate wretch exclaim'd. This land is mine,
Not hers; the kingdom and the power are mine;
I am the master!
Hath it made thee mad?
Erillyab cried. . . Ask thou the Snake-God that!
Quoth he; ask Neolin and Aztlan that!
Hear me, thou Son of the Waters! wilt thou have me
For friend or foe? . . Give me that woman there,
And store me with this blessed beverage,
And thou shalt dwell in my domains, . . or else,
Blood! blood! The Snake-God calls for blood; the Gods
Of Aztlan and the people call for blood;
They call on me, and I will give them blood,
Till they have had their fill.
Meanwhile the Queen
In wonder and amazement heard and grief;
Watching the fiendish workings of his face,

And turning to the Prince at times, as if
She look'd to him for comfort. Give him drink,
To be at peace! quoth Madoc. The good mead
Did its good office soon; his dizzy eyes
Roll'd with a sleepy swim; the joyous thrill
Died away; and as every limb relax'd,
Down sunk his heavy head and down he fell.
Then said the Prince, We must rejoice in this,
O Queen and friend, that, evil though it be,
Evil is brought to light; he hath divulged
In this mad mood, what else had been conceal'd
By guilty cunning. Set a watch upon him
And on Priest Neolin; they plot against us;
Your fall and mine do they alike conspire,
Being leagued with Aztlan to destroy us both.
Thy son will not remember that his lips
Have let the treason pass. Be wary then,
And we shall catch the crafty in the pit
Which they have dug for us.
Erillyab cast
A look of anger, made intense by grief,
On Amalahta. . . Cursed be the hour
Wherein I gave thee birth! she cried; that pain
Was light to what thy base and brutal nature
Hath sent into my soul. . . But take thou heed!
I have borne many a woe and many a loss, . .
My father's realm, the husband of my youth,
My hope in thee! . . all motherly love is gone, . .
Sufferance well nigh worn out.
When she had ceased,
Still the deep feeling fill'd her, and her eye
Dwelt on him, still in thought. Brother! she cried,
As Madoc would have sooth'd her, doubt not me!
Mine is no feeble heart. Abundantly
Did the Great Spirit overpay all woes,
And this the heaviest, when he sent thee here,
The friend and the deliverer. Evil tongues
May scatter lies; bad spirits and bad men
May league against thy life; but go thou on,
Brother! He loves thee and will be thy shield.

V. WAR DENOUNCED

This is the day, when, in a foreign grave,
King Owen's relics shall be laid to rest.
No bright emblazonries bedeck'd his bier,
No tapers blazed, no prelate sung the mass,
No choristers the funeral dirge intoned,
No mitred abbots, and no tonsured train,
Lengthen'd the pomp of ceremonious woe.
His decent bier was with white linen spread
And canopied; two elks and bisons, yoked,
Drew on the car; foremost Cadwallon bore
The Crucifix; with single voice, distinct,
The good priest Llorien chaunted loud and deep
The solemn service; Madoc next the bier
Follow'd his father's corpse; bareheaded then
Came all the people, silently and slow.

The burial-place was in a grassy plat,
A little level glade of sunny green,
Between the river and a rocky bank,
Which, like a buttress, from the precipice
Of naked rock sloped out. On either side

'Twas skirted by the woodlands. A stone cross
Stood on Cynetha's grave, sole monument,
Beneath a single cocoa, whose straight trunk
Rose like an obelisk, and waved on high
Its palmy plumage, green and never sere.
Here by Cynetha's side, with Christian prayers,
All wrongs forgotten now, was Owen laid.
Rest, King of Gwyneth, in a foreign grave!
From foul indignity of Romish pride
And bigot priesthood, from a falling land
Thus timely snatch'd, and from the impending yoke, . .
Rest in the kingdom of thy noble son!

Ambassadors from Aztlan in the vale
Awaited their return, . . Yuhidthiton,
Chief of the Chiefs, and Helhua the priest;
With these came Malinal. They met the Prince,
And with a sullen stateliness return'd
His salutation, then the Chief began:
Lord of the Strangers, hear me! by my voice
The People and the Pabas and the King
Of Aztlan speak. Our injured Gods have claim'd
Their wonted worship, and made manifest
Their wrath; we dare not impiously provoke
The Dreadful. Worship ye in your own way;
But we must keep the path our fathers kept.

We parted, O Yuhidthiton! as friends
And brethren, said the Christian Prince; . . alas,
That this should be our meeting! When we pledged,
In the broad daylight and the eye of Heaven,
Our hands in peace, ye heard the will of God,
And felt and understood. This calm assent
Ye would belie, by midnight miracles
Scared, and such signs of darkness as beseem
The Demons whom ye dread; or likelier
Duped by the craft of those accursed men,
Whose trade is blood. Ask thou of thine own heart,
Yuhidthiton, . .
But Helhua broke his speech;
Our bidding is to tell thee, quoth the Priest,
That Aztlan hath restored, and will maintain,
Her ancient faith. If it offendeth thee,
Move thou thy dwelling place!
Madoc replied,
This day have I deposited in earth
My father's bones, and where his bones are laid,
There mine shall moulder.
Malinal at that
Advanced; . . Prince Madoc, said the youth, I come,
True to thy faith and thee, and to the weal
Of Aztlan true, and bearing, for that truth,
Reproach and shame and scorn and obloquy.
In sorrow come I here, a banish'd man;
Here take, in sorrow, my abiding place,
Cut off from all my kin, from all old ties
Divorced; all dear familiar countenances
No longer to be present to my sight;
The very mother-language which I learnt,
A lisping baby on my mother's knees,
No more with its sweet sounds to comfort me.
So be it! . . To his brother then he turn'd;
Yuhidthiton, said he, when thou shalt find, . .
As find thou wilt, . . that those accursed men
Have played the juggler with thee, and deceived
Thine honest heart, . . when Aztlan groans in blood, . .
Bid her remember then, that Malinal

Is in the dwellings of her enemy;
Where all his hope in banishment hath been
To intercede for her, and heal her wounds,
And mitigate her righteous punishment.

Sternly and sullenly his brother heard;
Yet hearken'd he as one whose heart perforce
Suppress'd its instinct, and there might be seen
A sorrow in his silent stubbornness.
And now his ministers on either hand
A water-vessel fill, and heap dry sedge
And straw before his face, and fire the pile.
He, looking upward, spread his arms and cried,
Hear me, ye Gods of Aztlan, as we were,
And are, and will be yours! Behold your foes!
He stoopt, and lifted up one ample urn, . .
Thus let their blood be shed! . . and far away
He whirl'd the scattering water. Then again
Raised the full vase, . . Thus let their lives be quench'd!
And out he pour'd it on the flaming pile.
The steam-cloud, hissing from the extinguish'd heap,
Spread like a mist, and ere it melted off,
Homeward the heralds of the war had turn'd.

VI. THE FESTIVAL OF THE DEAD

The Hoamen in their Council-hall are met
To hold the Feast of Souls; seat above seat,
Ranged round the circling theatre they sit.
No light but from the central fire, whose smoke,
Slow passing through the over aperture,
Excludes the day, and fills the conic roof,
And hangs above them like a cloud. Around,
The ghastly bodies of their chiefs are hung,
Shrivell'd and parch'd by heat; the humbler dead
Lie on the floor, . . white bones, exposed to view,
On deer, or elk-skin laid, or softer fur,
Or web, the work of many a mournful hour;
The loathlier forms of fresh mortality
Swathed, and in decent tenderness conceal'd.
Beside each body pious gifts are laid,
Mantle and belt and feathery coronal,
The bow he used in war, his drinking shell,
His arrows for the chace, the sarbacan,
Through whose long tube the slender shaft, breath driven,
Might pierce the winged game. Husbands and wives,
Parents and children, there in death they lie;
The widow'd and the parent and the child
Look on in silence. Not a sound is heard
But of the crackling brand, or mouldering fire,
Or when, amid yon pendant string of shells,
The slow wind wakes a shrill and feeble sound, . .
A sound of sorrow to the mind attuned
By sights of woe.
Ayayaca at length
Came forward: . . Spirits, is it well with ye?
Is it well, Brethren? said the aged Priest;
Have ye received your mourning, and the rites
Of righteous grief? or round your dwelling-place
Still do your shadows roam dissatisfied,
And to the cries of wailing woe return
A voice of lamentation? Teach us now,
If we in aught have fail'd, that I, your Priest,
When I shall join ye soon, as soon I must,
May unimpeded pass the perilous floods,

And in the Country of the Dead, be hail'd
By you, with song and dance and grateful joy.

So saying, to the Oracle he turn'd,
Awaiting there the silence which implied
Peaceful assent. Against the eastern wall,
Fronting the narrow portal's winding way,
An Image stood: a cloak of fur disguised
The rude proportion of its uncouth limbs;
The skull of some old seer of days of old
Topt it, and with a visor this was mask'd,
Honouring the oracular Spirit, who at times
There took his resting place. Ayayaca
Repeated, Brethren, is it well with ye?
And raised the visor. But he started back,
Appall'd and shuddering; for a moony light
Lay in its eyeless sockets, and there came
From its immoveable and bony jaws
A long deep groan, thrice utter'd, and thrice felt
In every heart of all the hearers round.
The good old Priest stood tottering, like a man
Stricken with palsy; and he gazed with eyes
Of asking horror round, as if he look'd
For counsel in that fear. But Neolin
Sprung boldly to the oracle, and cried,
Speak, Spirit! tell us of our sin, and teach
The atonement! A sepulchral voice replied,
Ye have for other Gods forsaken us,
And we abandon you! . . and crash with that
The Image fell.
A loud and hideous shriek,
As of a demon, Neolin set up;
So wild a yell, that, even in that hour,
It brought fresh terror to the startled ear.
While yet they sate, pale and irresolute,
Helhua the Azteca came in. He bore
A shield and arrow, . . symbols these of war,
Yet now beheld with hope, so great relief
They felt his human presence.
Hoamen, hear me!
The messenger began; Erillyab, hear,
Priests, Elders, People! but hear chiefly thou,
Prince Amalahta, as of these by birth,
So now of years mature, the rightful Lord! . .
Shall it be peace or war? . . thus Aztlan saith;
She, in her anger, from the land will root
The Children of the Sea; but viewing you
In mercy, to your former vassalage
Invites ye, and remits the tribute lives,
And for rebellion claimeth no revenge.

Oh praise your Gods! cried Neolin, and hail
This day-spring of new hope! Aztlan remits
The tribute lives, . . what more could Madoc give?
She claimeth no revenge, and if she claimed,
He could not save. O Hoamen, bless your Gods;
Appease them! Thou, Prince Amalahta, speak,
And seize the mercy.
Amalahta stood
In act of speech; but then Erillyab rose . .
Who gives thee, Boy, this Elder's privilege?
The Queen exclaim'd; . . and thou, Priest Neolin,
Curb thou thy traitorous tongue! The reign is mine;
I hold it from my father, he from his;
Age before age, beyond the memory
Of man it hath been thus. My father fell
In battle for his people, and his sons
Fell by his side; they perish'd, but their names
Are with the names we love, . . their happy souls

Pursue in fields of bliss the shadowy deer;
The spirit of that noble blood which ran
From their death-wounds, is in the ruddy clouds
Which go before the Sun, when he comes forth
In glory. Last of that illustrious race
Was I, Erillyab. Ye remember well,
Elders, that day when I assembled here
The people, and demanded at their choice
The worthiest, to perpetuate our old line
Of Kings and Warriors. . . To the wind he spread
His black and blood-red banner. Even now
I hear his war drum's tripled sound, that call'd
The youth to battle; even now behold
The hope which lit his dark and fiery eye,
And kindled with a sunnier glow his cheek,
As he from yonder war-pole, in his pride,
Took the death-doers down . . Lo here the bones
Of King Tepollomi! . . my husband's bones! . .
There should be some among ye who beheld,
When, all with arrows quill'd, and clothed with blood
As with a purple garment, he sustain'd
The unequal conflict, till the Aztecas
Took him at vantage, and their monarch's club
Let loose his struggling soul. Look, Hoamen, here,
See through how wide a wound his spirit fled!
Twenty long years of mournful widowhood
Have pass'd away; so long have I maintain'd
The little empire left us, loving well
My people, and by them as well beloved.
Say, Hoamen, am I still your Queen?
At once
The whole assembly rose with one acclaim, . .
Still, O Erillyab, O Beloved, rule
Thy own beloved people!
But the Gods!
Cried Amalahta, . . but the Oracle!
The Oracle! quoth she; what hath it said
That forty years of suffering hath not taught
This wretched people? . . They abandon us? . .
So let them go! Where were they at that hour,
When, like a blasting night-wind in the spring,
The multitudes of Aztlan came upon us?
Where were they when my father went to war?
Where were they when thy father's stiffen'd corpse,
Even after death a slave, held up the lamp
To light his conqueror's revels? . . Think not, Boy,
To palter with me thus! A fire may tremble
Within the sockets of a skull, and groans
May issue from a dead man's fleshless jaws,
And images may fall, and yet no God
Be there! . . If it had walk'd abroad with life,
That had indeed been something!
Then she turn'd
Her voice toward the people. . . Ye have heard
This Priest of Aztlan, whose insidious tongue
Bids ye desert the Children of the Sea,
And vow again your former vassalage.
Speaks Aztlan of the former? O my people,
I too could tell ye of the former days,
When yonder plain was ours, with all its woods
And waters and savannahs! . . of those days,
When, following where her husband's stronger arm
Had open'd the light glebe, the willing wife
Dropt in the yellow maize; ere long to bear
Its increase to the general store, and toss

Her flowing tresses in the dance of joy.
And I could tell ye how those summer stores
Were hoarded for the invader's winter feasts;
And how the widows clipt those flowing locks
To strew them, . . not upon their husband's grave, . .
Their husbands had no graves! . . but on the rocks
And mountains in their flight. And even these rocks
And mountains could not save us! Year by year
Our babes, like firstlings of the flock, were cull'd
To be the banquet of these Aztecas!
This very wretch, who tells us of the past,
Hath chosen them for the butchery. . . Oh, I thank you
For this brave anger! . . In your name I take
The war-gift!
Gods of Aztlan, Helhua cried,
As to Erillyab's ready hand he gave
The deadly symbol, in your name I give
The war-gift! Ye have thirsted over long;
Take now your fill of blood! . . He turn'd away;
And Queen Erillyab bade the tribe fulfil
Their customary rites.
Each family
Bore its own dead, and to the general grave,
With melancholy song and sob of woe,
The slow procession moves. The general grave
Was delved within a deep and shady dell,
Fronting a cavern in the rock, . . the scene
Of many a bloody rite, ere Madoc came, . .
A temple, as they deem'd, by Nature made,
Where the Snake-Idol stood. On fur and cloth
Of woven grass, they lay their burthens down,
Within the ample pit; their offerings range
Beside, and piously a portion take
Of that cold earth, to which, for ever now
Consign'd, they leave their fathers, dust to dust;
Sad relic that, and wise remembrancer.

But as with bark and resinous boughs they pile
The sepulchre, suddenly Neolin
Sprung up aloft, and shriek'd, as one who treads
Upon a viper in his heedless path.
The God! the very God! he cried, and howl'd
One long, shrill, piercing, modulated cry;
Whereat from that dark temple issued forth
A Serpent, huge and hideous. On he came,
Straight to the sound, and curl'd around the Priest
His mighty folds innocuous, overtopping
His human height, and arching down his head,
Sought in the hands of Neolin for food;
Then questing, rear'd and stretch'd and waved his neck,
And glanced his forky tongue. Who then had seen
The man, with what triumphant fearlessness,
Arms, thighs, and neck, and body, wreathed and ring'd
In those tremendous folds, he stood secure,
Play'd with the reptile's jaws, and call'd for food,
Food for the present God! . . who then had seen
The fiendish joy which fired his countenance,
Might well have ween'd that he had summoned up
The dreadful monster from its native Hell,
By devilish power, himself a Fiend inflesh'd.

Blood for the God! he cried; Lincoya's blood!
Friend of the Serpent's foe! . . Lincoya's blood!

Cried Amalahta, and the people turn'd
Their eyes to seek the victim, as if each
Sought his own safety in that sacrifice.
Alone Erillyab raised her voice, confused
But not confounded; she alone exclaim'd,
Madoc shall answer this! Unheard her voice
By the bewilder'd people, by the Priest
Unheeded; and Lincoya sure had fallen
The victim of their fear, had he been found
In that wild hour; but when his watchful eye
Beheld the Serpent from his den come forth,
He fled to bear the tidings. . . Neolin
Repeats the accursed call, Food for the God!
Ayayaca, his unbelieving Priest!
At once all eager eyes were fix'd on him,
But he came forward calmly at the call;
Lo! here am I! quoth he; and from his head
Plucking the thin grey hairs he dealt them round. . .
Countrymen, kinsmen, brethren, children, take
These in remembrance of me! there will be
No relic of your aged Priest but this.
From manhood to old age, full threescore years,
Have I been your true servant: fit it is
That I, who witness'd Aztlan's first assault,
Should perish her last victim! . . and he moved
Towards the death. But then Erillyab
Seized him, and by the garment drew him back! . .
By the Great Spirit, but he shall not die!
The Queen exclaim'd; nor shalt thou triumph thus,
Liar and traitor! Hoamen, to your homes!
Madoc shall answer this!
Irresolute
They heard, and inobedient; to obey
Fearing, yet fearful to remain. Anon,
The Queen repeats her bidding, To your homes,
My people! . . But when Neolin perceived
The growing stir and motion of the crowd,
As from the outward ring they moved away,
He utter'd a new cry, and disentangling
The passive reptile's folds, rush'd out among them,
With outstretch'd hands, like one possess'd, to seize
His victim. Then they fled; for who could tell
On whom the madman, in that hellish fit.
Might cast the lot? An eight-years' boy he seized
And held him by the leg, and, whirling him
In ritual dance, till breath and sense were gone,
Set up the death-song of the sacrifice.
Amalahta, and what others rooted love
Of evil leagued with him, accomplices
In treason, join'd the death-song and the dance.
Some too there were, believing what they fear'd,
Who yielded to their old idolatry,
And mingled in the worship. Round and round
The accursed minister of murder whirl'd
His senseless victim; they too round and round
In maddening motion, and with maddening cries
Revolving, whirl'd and wheel'd. At length, when now,
According to old rites, he should have dash'd
On the stone Idol's head the wretch's brains,
Neolin stopt, and once again began
The long, shrill, piercing, modulated cry.
The Serpent knew the call, and, rolling on,
Wave above wave, his rising length, advanced
His open jaws: then, with the expected prey,
Glides to the dark recesses of his den.

VII. THE SNAKE GOD

MEANTIME Erillyab's messenger had girt
His loins, and like a roebuck, o'er the hills
He sped. He met Cadwallon and the Prince
In arms, so quickly Madoc had obey'd
Lincoya's call; at noon he heard the call,
And still the sun was riding high in heaven,
When up the valley where the Hoamen dwelt
He led his twenty spears. O welcome, friend
And brother! cried the Queen. Even as thou saidst
So hath it proved; and those accursed schemes
Of treachery, which that wretched boy reveal'd
Under the influence of thy potent drink,
Have ripen'd to effect. From what a snare
The timely warning saved me! for, be sure,
What I had seen I else should have believed,
In utter fear confounded. The Great Spirit,
Who taught thee to foresee the evil thing,
Will give thee power to quell it.
On they went
Toward the dell, where now the Idolaters
Had built their dedicated fire, and still
With feast and fits of song and violent dance,
Pursued their rites. When Neolin perceived
The Prince approach, fearlessly he came forth,
And raised his arm, and cried, Strangers, away!
Away, profane! hence to your mother-land!
Hence to your waters; for the God is here; . .
He came for blood, and he shall have his fill!
Impious, away!
Seize him! exclaim'd the Prince;
Nor had he time for motion nor for flight,
So instantly was that command obey'd.
Hoamen, said Madoc, hear me! . . I came here,
Stranger alike to Aztlan and to you;
I found ye an oppress and wretched race,
Groaning beneath your chains; at your request,
For your deliverance, I unsheathed the sword,
Redeem'd ye from your bondage, and preserved
Your children from the slaughter. With those foes
Whose burthen ye for forty years endured,
This traitor hath conspired, against yourselves,
Your Queen, and me your friend; the solemn faith
Which in the face of yonder sun we pledged,
Each to the other, this perfidious man
Hath broken, and hath stain'd his hands this day
With innocent blood. Life must atone for life:
Ere I destroy the Serpent, whom his wiles
Have train'd so well, last victim, he shall glut
The monster's maw.
Strike, man! quoth Neolin.
This is my consummation! the reward
Of my true faith! the best that I could ask,
The best the God could give: . . to rest in him,
Body with body be incorporate,
Soul into soul absorb'd, and I and He
One life, inseparable, for evermore.
Strike, I am weary of this mortal part;
Unite me to the God!
Triumphantly
He spake; the assembled people, at his words,
With rising awe gazed on the miscreant;
Madoc himself, when now he would have given
The sign for death, in admiration paused,
Such power hath fortitude. And he perceived

The auspicious moment, and set up his cry.
Forth, from the dark recesses of the cave,
The Serpent came: the Hoamen at the sight
Shouted, and they who held the Priest, appall'd
Relax'd their hold. On came the mighty snake,
And twined, in many a wreath, round Neolin,
Darting aright, aleft, his sinuous neck,
With searching eye, and lifted jaw and tongue
Quivering, and hiss as of a heavy shower
Upon the summer woods. The Britons stood
Astounded at the powerful reptile's bulk
And that strange sight. His girth was as of man,
But easily could he have overtopp'd
Goliath's helmed head, or that huge King
Of Basan, hugest of the Anakim:
What then was human strength, if once involved
Within those dreadful coils? . . The multitude
Fell prone, and worshipp'd; pale Erillyab grew,
And turn'd upon the Prince a doubtful eye;
The Britons too were pale, albeit they held
Their spears protended; and they also look'd
On Madoc, who the while stood silently,
Contemplating how wiseliest he might cope
With that surpassing strength.
But Neolin,
Well hoping now success, when he had awed
The general feeling thus, exclaim'd aloud,
Blood for the God! give him the Stranger's blood!
Avenge him on his foes! And then, perchance,
Terror had urged them to some desperate deed,
Had Madoc ponder'd more, or paused in act
One moment. From the sacrificial flames
He snatch'd a firebrand, and with fire and sword,
Rush'd at the monster: back the monster drew
His head upraised recoiling, and the Prince
Smote Neolin; all circled as he was,
And clipt in his false Deity's embrace,
Smote he the accursed Priest; the avenging sword
Fell on his neck; through flesh and bone it drove
Deep in the chest: the wretched criminal
Totter'd, and those huge rings a moment held
His bloody corpse upright, while Madoc struck
The Serpent: twice he struck him, and the sword
Glanced from the impenetrable scales; nor more
Avail'd its thrust, though driven by that strong arm;
For on the unyielding skin the temper'd blade
Bent. He sprung upward then, and in the eyes
Of the huge monster flashed the fiery brand.
Impatient of the smoke and burning, back
The reptile wreathed, and from his loosening clasp
Dropt the dead Neolin, and turn'd, and fled
To his dark den.
The Hoamen, at that sight
Raised a loud wonder-cry, with one accord,
Great is the Son of Ocean, and his God
Is mightiest! But Erillyab silently
Approach'd the great Deliverer; her whole frame
Trembled with strong emotion, and she took
His hand, and gazed a moment earnestly,
Having no power of speech, till with a gush
Of tears her utterance came, and she exclaim'd,

Blessed art thou, my brother! for the power
Of God is in thee!.. and she would have kissed
His hand in adoration; but he cried,
God is indeed with us, and in his name
Will we complete the work!.. then to the cave
Advanced, and call'd for fire. Bring fire! quoth he;
By his own element the spawn of hell
Shall perish! and he enter'd, to explore
The cavern depths. Cadwallon follow'd him,
Bearing in either hand a flaming brand,
For sword or spear avail'd not.
Far in the hill,
Cave within cave, the ample grotto pierced,
Three chambers in the rock. Fit vestibule
The first to that wild temple, long and low,
Shut out the outward day. The second vault
Had its own daylight from a central chasm
High in the hollow; here the Image stood,
Their rude idolatry, .. a sculptured snake, ..
If term of art may such mis-shapen form
Beseem, .. around a human figure coil'd,
And all begrimed with blood. The inmost cell
Dark; and far up within its blackest depth
They saw the Serpent's still small eye of fire.
Not if they thinn'd the forest for their pile,
Could they, with flame or suffocating smoke,
Destroy him there; for through the open roof
The clouds would pass away. They paused not long:
Drive him beneath the chasm, Cadwallon cried,
And hem him in with fire, and from above
We crush him.
Forth they went and climb'd the hill.
With all their people. Their united strength
Loosen'd the rocks, and ranged them round the brink,
Impending. With Cadwallon on the height
Ten Britons wait; ten with the Prince descend,
And, with a firebrand each in either hand,
Enter the outer cave. Madoc advanced,
And at the entrance of the inner den,
He took his stand alone. A bow he bore,
And arrows round whose heads dry tow was twined,
In pine-gum dipt; he kindled these, and shot
The fiery shafts. Upon the scaly skin,
As on a rock, the bone-tipt arrows fell;
But, at their bright and blazing light effray'd,
Out rush'd the reptile. Madoc from his path
Retired against the side, and call'd his men,
And in they came and circled round the Snake,
And shaking all their flames, as with a wheel
Of fire, they ring'd him in. From side to side
The monster turns!.. where'er he turns, the flame
Flares in his nostrils and his blinking eyes;
Nor aught against the dreaded element
Did that brute force avail, which could have crush'd
Milo's young limbs, or Theban Hercules,
Or old Manoah's mightier son, ere yet
Shorn of his strength. They press him now, and now
Give back, here urging, and here yielding way,
Till right beneath the chasm they centre him.
At once the crags are loosed, and down they fall
Thundering. They fell like thunder, but the crash

Of scale and bone was heard. In agony
The Serpent writhed beneath the blow; in vain,
From under the incumbent load essay'd
To drag his mangled folds. One heavier stone
Fasten'd and flatten'd him; yet still, with tail
Ten cubits long, he lash'd the air, and foined
From side to side, and raised his raging head
Above the height of man, though half his length
Lay mutilate. Who then had felt the force
Of that wild fury, little had to him
Buckler or corselet profited, or mail,
Or might of human arm. The Britons shrunk
Beyond its arc of motion; but the Prince
Took a long spear, and springing on the stone
Which fix'd the monster down, provoked his rage.
Uplifts the Snake his head retorted, high
He lifts it over Madoc, then darts down
To seize his prey. The Prince, with foot advanced
Inclines his body back, and points the spear
With sure and certain aim, then drives it up,
Into his open jaws; two cubits deep
It pierced, the monster forcing on the wound.
He closed his teeth for anguish, and bit short
The ashen hilt. But not the rage which now
Clangs all his scales, can from his seat dislodge
The barbed shaft: nor those contortions wild,
Nor those convulsive shudderings, nor the throes
Which shake his inmost entrails, as with the air
In suffocating gulps the monster now
Inhales his own life-blood. The Prince descends;
He lifts another lance; and now the Snake,
Gasping, as if exhausted, on the ground
Reclines his head one moment. Madoc seized
That moment, planted in his eye the spear,
Then setting foot upon his neck, drove down
Through bone and brain and throat, and to the earth
Infixed the mortal weapon. Yet once more
The Snake essay'd to rise; his dying strength
Fail'd him, nor longer did those mighty folds
Obey the moving impulse, crush'd and scotch'd;
In every ring, through all his mangled length,
The shrinking muscles quiver'd, then collapsed
In death.
Cadwallon and his comrades now
Enter the den; they roll away the crag
Which held him down, pluck out the mortal spear,
Then drag him forth to day; the force conjoin'd
Of all the Britons difficultly drag
His lifeless bulk. But when the Hoamen saw
That form portentous trailing in its gore,
The jaws which, in the morning, they had seen
Purpled with human blood, now in their own
Blackening, . . aknee they fell before the Prince,
And in adoring admiration raised
Their hands with one accord, and all in fear
Worshipped the mighty Deicide. But he,
Recoiling from those sinful honours, cried,
Drag out the Idol now, and heap the fire,
That all may be consumed!
Forthwith they heap'd
The sacrificial fire, and on the pile

The Serpent and the Image and the corpse
Of Neolin were laid; with prompt supply
They feed the raging flames, hour after hour,
Till now the black and nauseous smoke is spent,
And mingled with the ruins of the pile,
The undistinguishable ashes lay.
Go! cried Prince Madoc, cast them in the stream,
And scatter them upon the winds, that so
No relic of this foul idolatry
Pollute the land. To-morrow meet me here,
Hoamen, and I will purify yon den
Of your abominations. Come ye here
With humble hearts; for ye, too, in the sight
Of the Great Spirit, the Beloved One,
Must be made pure, and cleansed from your offence,
And take upon yourselves his holy law.

VIII. THE CONVERSION OF THE HOAMEN

How beautiful, O Sun, is thine uprise,
And on how fair a scene! Before the Cave
The Elders of the Hoamen wait the will
Of their Deliverer; ranged without their ring
The tribe look on, thronging the narrow vale,
And what of gradual rise the shelving combe
Displayed, or steeper eminence of wood,
Broken with crags and sunny slope of green,
And grassy platform. With the Elders sate
The Queen and Prince, their rank's prerogative,
Excluded else for sex unfit, and youth
For counsel immature. Before the arch,
To that rude fane, rude portal, stands the Cross,
By Madoc's hand victorious planted there.
And lo, Prince Madoc comes! no longer mail'd
In arms of mortal might; the spear and sword,
The hauberk and the helmet laid aside,
Gorget and gauntlet, grieves and shield, . . he comes
In peaceful tunic clad, and mantle long;
His hyacinthine locks now shadowing
That face, which late, with iron overbrow'd,
Struck from within the aventayle such awe
And terror to the heart. Bareheaded he,
Following the servant of the altar, leads
The reverential train. Before them, raised
On high, the sacred images are borne;
There, in faint semblance, holiest Mary bends
In virgin beauty o'er her babe divine, . .
A sight which almost to idolatry
Might win the soul by love. But who can gaze
Upon that other form, which on the rood
In agony is stretch'd? . . his hands transfix'd,
And lacerate with the body's pendent weight;
The black and deadly paleness of his face,
Streak'd with the blood which from that crown of scorn
Hath ceased to flow; the side wound streaming still;
And open still those eyes, from which the look
Not yet hath pass'd away, that went to Heaven,
When, in that hour, the Son of Man exclaim'd,
Forgive them, for they know not what they do!
And now arrived before the cave, the train
Halt: to the assembled Elders, where they sate
Ranged in half circle, Madoc then advanced,

And raised, as if in act to speak, his hand.
Thereat was every human sound suppress'd;
And every quicken'd ear and eager eye
Were center'd on his lips.
The Prince began, . .
Hoamen, friends, brethren, . . friends we have been long,
And brethren shall be, ere the day go down, . .
I come not here propounding doubtful things
For counsel, and deliberate resolve
Of searching thought; but with authority
From Heaven, to give the law, and to enforce
Obedience. Ye shall worship God alone,
The One Eternal. That Beloved One
Ye shall not serve with offer'd fruits, or smoke
Of sacrificial fire, or blood, or life:
Far other sacrifice he claims, . . a soul
Resign'd, a will subdued, a heart made clean
From all offence. Not for your lots on earth,
Menial or mighty, slave or highly-born,
For cunning in the chase, or strength in war,
Shall ye be judged hereafter; . . as ye keep
The law of love, as ye shall tame your wrath,
Forego revenge, forgive your enemies,
Do good to them that wrong ye, ye will find
Your bliss or bale. This law came down from Heaven.
Lo, ye behold Him there by whom it came;
The Spirit was in Him, and for the sins
Of man He suffered thus, and by His death
Must all mankind be blest. Not knowing Him,
Ye wander'd on in error; knowing now,
And not obeying, what was error once
Is guilt and wilful wrong. If ever more
Ye bow to your false deities the knee;
If ever more ye worship them with feast,
Or sacrifice or dance; whoso offends
Shall from among the people be cut off,
Like a corrupted member, lest he taint
The whole with death. With what appointed rites
Your homage must be paid, ye shall be taught;
Your children, in the way that they shall go,
Be train'd from childhood up. Make ye meantime,
Your prayer to that Beloved One, who sees
The secrets of all hearts; and set ye up
This, the memorial of his chosen Son,
And Her, who, blessed among women, fed
The Appointed at Her breast, and by His cross
Endured intenser anguish; therefore sharing
His glory now, with sunbeams robed, the Moon
Her footstool, and a wreath of stars her crown.

Hoamen, ye deem us children of a race
Mightier than ye, and wiser, and by Heaven
Beloved and favour'd more. From this pure law
Hath all proceeded, . . wisdom, power, whate'er
Here elevates the soul, and makes it ripe
For higher powers and more exalted bliss.
Share then our law, and be with us, on earth,
Partakers of these blessings, and, in Heaven,
Co-heritors with us of endless joy.

Ere yet one breath or motion had disturb'd
The reverential hush, Erillyab rose.
My people, said the Queen, their God is best
And mightiest. Him to whom we offered up
Blood of our blood and of our flesh the flesh,

Vainly we deem'd divine; no spirit he
Of good or evil, by the conquering arm
Of Madoc mortal proved. What then remains
But that the blessing, proffer'd thus in love,
In love we take? . . Deliverer, Teacher, Friend,
First in the fellowship of faith I claim
The initiatory rite.
I also, cried
The venerable Priest Ayayaca,
Old as I am, I also, like a child,
Would learn this wisdom yet before I die.
The Elders rose and answer'd, We and all!
And from the congregated tribe burst forth
One universal shout, . . Great is the God
Of Madoc, . . worthy to be served is He!

Then to the mountain rivulet, which roll'd
Like amber over its dark bed of rock,
Did Madoc lead Erillyab, in the name
Of JESUS, to his Christian family
Accepted now. On her and on her son,
The Elders and the People, Llorien
Sprinkled the sanctifying waters. Day
Was scarcely two hours old when he began
His work, and when he ceased, the sun had pass'd
The heights of noon. Ye saw that blessed work,
Sons of the Cymry, Cadog, Deiniol,
Padarn, and Teilo! ye whose sainted names
Your monumental temples still record;
Thou, David, still revered, who in the vale,
Where, by old Hatterill's wintry torrents swoln
Rude Hodney rolls his raging stream, didst choose
Thy hermit home; and ye who by the sword
Of the fierce Saxon, when the bloodier Monk
Urged on the work of murder, for your faith
And freedom fell, . . Martyrs and Saints, ye saw
This triumph of the Cymry and the Cross,
And struck your golden harps to hymns of joy.

IX. TLALALA

As now the rites were ended, Caradoc
Came from the ships, leading an Azteca
Guarded and bound. Prince Madoc, said the Bard,
Lo! the first captive of our arms I bring.
Alone, beside the river I had stray'd,
When, from his lurking place, the savage hurl'd
A javelin. At the rustle of the reeds,
From whence the blow was aim'd, I turn'd in time,
And heard it whizz beside me. Well it was,
That from the ships they saw and succour'd me;
For, subtle as a serpent in my grasp,
He seemed all joint and flexure; nor had I
Armour to ward, nor weapon to offend,
To battle all unused and unprepared;
But I too here upon this barbarous land
Like Elmur and like Aronan of old,
Must lift the ruddy spear.
This is no day
For vengeance, answer'd Madoc, else his deed
Had met no mercy. Freely let him go!
Perchance the tidings of our triumph here
May yet reclaim his country. . . Azteca,
Go, let your Pabas know that we have crush'd
Their complots here; beneath our righteous sword
The Priest and his false Deity have fallen;
The idols are consumed, and in their stead
The emblems of our holy faith set up,
Whereof the Hoamen have this day been made
Partakers. Say to Aztlan, when she too

Will make her temples clean, and put away
Her foul abominations, and accept
The Christian Cross, that Madoc then accords
Forgiveness for the past, and peace to come.
This better part let her, of her free will
And wisdom, choose in time.
Till Madoc spake,
The captive reckless of his peril stood,
Gazing with resolute and careless eye,
As one in whom the lot of life or death
Moved neither fear nor feeling; but that eye
Now sparkling with defiance, . . Seek ye peace?
He cried: O weak and woman-hearted man!
Already wouldst thou lay the sword to rest?
Not with the burial of the sword this strife
Must end, for never doth the Tree of Peace
Strike root and flourish, till the strong man's hand
Upon his enemy's grave hath planted it.
Come ye to Aztlan then in quest of peace?
Ye feeble souls, if that be what ye seek,
Fly hence! our Aztlan suffers on her soil
No living stranger.
Do thy bidding, Chief!
Calmly Cadwallon answered. To her choice
Let Aztlan look, lest what she now reject
In insolence of strength, she take upon her,
In sorrow and in suffering and in shame,
By strong compulsion, penitent too late.
Thou hast beheld our ships with gallant men
Freighted, a numerous force, . . and for our arms, . .
Surely thy nation hath acquired of them
Disastrous knowledge.
Curse upon your arms!
Exclaim'd the savage: . . Is there one among you
Dare lay that cowardly advantage by,
And meet me, man to man, in honest strife?
That I might grapple with him, weaponless,
On yonder rock, breast against breast, fair force
Of limb and breath and blood, . . till one, or both,
Dash'd down the shattering precipice, should feed
The mountain eagle! . . Give me, I beseech you,
That joy!
As wisely, said Cynetha's son,
Thy foe might challenge thee, and bid thee let
Thy strong right hand hang idle in the fray,
That so his weakness with thy strength might cope
In equal battle! . . Not in wrongful war,
The tyrants of our weaker brethren,
Wield we these dreadful arms, . . but when assail'd
By fraud and force, when call'd upon to aid
The feeble and oppress'd, shall we not
Then put our terrors forth, and thunder-strike
The guilty?
Silently the Savage heard;
Joy brighten'd in his eyes, as they unloosed
His bonds; he stretch'd his arms at length, to feel
His liberty, and like a greyhound then
Slipt from the leash, he bounded o'er the hills.
What was from early morning till noon day
The steady travel of a well-girt man,
He, with fleet feet and unfatiguable,
In three short hours hath traversed; in the lake
He plunged, now shooting forth his pointed arms,
Arrow-like darting on; recumbent now,
Forces with springing feet his easier way;
Then with new speed, as freshen'd by repose,

Again he breasts the water. On the shore
Of Aztlan now he stands, and breathes at will,
And wrings his dripping locks; then through the gate
Pursued his way.
Green garlands deck the gate;
Gay are the temples with green boughs affix'd;
The door-posts and the lintels hung with wreaths;
The fire of sacrifice, with flames bedimm'd,
Burns in the sun-light, pale; the victims wait
Around, impatient of their death delay'd.
The Priest, before Tezcalipoca's shrine,
Watches the maize-strewn threshold, to announce
The footsteps of the God; for this the day,
When to his favour'd city he vouchsafes
His annual presence, and, with unseen feet,
Imprints the maize-strewn threshold; follow'd soon
By all whose altars with eternal fires
Aztlan illumed, and fed with human blood; . .
Mexitli, woman-born, who from the womb,
Child of no mortal sire, leapt terrible,
The arm'd avenger of his mother's fame;
And he whose will the subject winds obey,
Quetzalcoal; and Tlaloc, Water-God,
And all the host of Deities, whose power
Requites with bounty Aztlan's pious zeal,
Health and rich increase giving to her sons,
And withering in the war her enemies.
So taught the Priests, and therefore were the gates
Green-garlanded, the temples green with boughs,
The door-posts and the lintels hung with wreaths;
And yonder victims, ranged around the fire,
Are destin'd, with the steam of sacrifice,
To greet their dreadful coming.
With the train
Of warrior Chiefs Coanocotzin stood,
That when the Priest proclaim'd the enter'd God,
His lips before the present Deity
Might pour effectual prayer. The assembled Chiefs
Saw Tlalala approach, more welcome now,
As one whose absence from the appointed rites
Had waken'd fear and wonder. . . Think not ye,
The youth exclaim'd, careless impiety
Could this day lead me wandering. I went forth
To dip my javelin in the Strangers' blood, . .
A sacrifice, methought, our Gods had loved
To scent, and sooner hasten'd to enjoy.
I fail'd, and fell a prisoner; but their fear
Released me, . . coward fear, or childish hope,
That, like Yuhidthiton, I might become
Their friend, and merit chastisement from Heaven,
Pleading the Strangers' cause. They bade me go
And proffer peace. . . Chiefs, were it possible
That tongue of mine could win you to that shame,
Out would I pluck the member, though my soul
Followed its bloody roots. The Stranger finds
No peace in Aztlan, but the peace of death!

'Tis bravely said! Yuhidthiton replied,
And fairly may'st thou boast, young Tlalala,
For thou art brave in battle. Yet 'twere well
If that same fearless tongue were taught to check
Its boyish licence now. No law forbade
Our friendship with the Stranger, when my voice

Pleaded for proffered peace; that fault
I shared
In common with the King, and with the
Chiefs,
The Pabas and the People, none fore-
seeing
Danger or guilt: but when at length
the Gods
Made evident their wrath in prodigies,
I yielded to their manifested will
My prompt obedience. . . Bravely hast
thou said,
And brave thou art, young Tiger of the
War!
But thou hast dealt with other enemies
Than these impenetrable men, . . with
foes,
Whose conquered Gods lie idle in their
chains,
And with tame weakness brook cap-
tivity.
When thou hast met the Strangers in the
fight,
And in the doings of that fight out-
done
Yuhidthiton, revile him then for one
Slow to defend his country and his
faith;
Till then, with reverence, as beseems thy
youth,
Respect thou his full fame!
I wrong it not!
I wrong it not! cried the young Azteca;
But truly, as I hope to equal it,
Honour thy well-earned glory. . . But
this peace! . .
Renounce it! . . say that it shall never
be! . .
Never, . . as long as there are Gods in
Heaven,
Or men in Aztlan!
That, the King replied,
The Gods themselves have answer'd.
Never yet
By holier ardour were our countrymen
Possess'd; peace-offerings of repentance
fill
The temple courts; from every voice
ascends
The contrite prayer; daily the victim's
heart,
Sends its propitiatory steam to Heaven;
And if the aid divine may be procured
By the most dread solemnities of faith,
And rigour of severest penitence,
Soon shall the present influence
strengthen us,
And Aztlan be triumphant.
While they spake,
The ceaseless sound of song and instru-
ment
Rung through the air, now rising like
the voice
Of angry ocean, now subsiding soft,
As when the breeze of evening dies
away.
The horn, and shrill-toned pipe, and
drum, that gave
Its music to the hand, and hollow'd
wood,
Drum-like, whose thunders, ever and
anon,
Commingling with the sea-shell's spiral
roar,
Closed the full harmony. And now the
eve
Pass'd on, and, through the twilight
visible,
The frequent fire-flies' brightening
beauties shone.
Anxious and often now the Priest
inspects
The maize-strewn threshold; for the
wonted hour
Was come, and yet no footstep of the
God!
More radiant now the fire of sacrifice,
Fed to full fury, blazed; and its red
smoke
Imparted to the darker atmosphere
Such obscure light as, o'er Vesuvio
seen,
Or pillared upon Etna's mountain-head,
Makes darkness dreadful. In the cap-
tives' cheeks
Then might a livid paleness have been
seen,
And wilder terror in their ghastly eyes,
Expecting momently the pang of death.
Soon in the multitude a doubt arose,
Which none durst mention, lest his
neighbour's fears,
Divulged, should strengthen his; . . the
hour was past,
And yet no foot had mark'd the
sprinkled maize!

X. THE ARRIVAL OF THE GODS

Now every moment gave their doubts new force,
And every wondering eye disclosed the fear
Which on the tongue was trembling, when to the King,
Emaciate like some bare anatomy,
And deadly pale, Tezozomoc was led,
By two supporting Priests. Ten painful months,
Immured amid the forest had he dwelt,
In abstinence and solitary prayer
Passing his nights and days; thus did the Gods
From their High Priest exact, when they enforced,
By danger or distress, the penance due
For public sins; and he had dwelt ten months,
Praying and fasting and in solitude,
Till now might every bone of his lean limbs
Be told, and in his starved and bony face
The living eye appeared unnatural, . .
A ghostly sight.
In breathless eagerness
The multitude drew round as he began, . .
O King, the Gods of Aztlan are not come;
They will not come before the Strangers' blood
Smoke on their altars: but they have beheld
My days of prayer, and nights of watchfulness,
And fasts austere, and bloody disciplines,
And have reveal'd their pleasure. Who is here,
Who to the White King's dwelling-place dare go,
And execute their will?
Scarce had he said,
When Tlalala exclaim'd, I am the man.

Hear then! Tezozomoc replied, . .
Ye know
That self-denial and long penance purge
The film and foulness of mortality,
For more immediate intercourse with Heaven
Preparing the pure spirit; and all eyes
May witness that with no relaxing zeal
I have perform'd my duty. Much I fear'd
For Aztlan's sins, and oft in bitterness,
Have groan'd and bled for her iniquity;
But chiefly for this solemn day the fear
Was strong upon me, lest her Deities,
Estranged, should turn away, and we be left
A spiritless and God-abandoned race,
A warning to the earth. Ten weary months
Have the raw maize and running water been
My only food; but not a grain of maize
Hath stay'd the gnawing appetite, nor drop
Of water cool'd my parch'd and painful tongue,
Since yester-morn arose. Fasting I pray'd,
And, praying, gash'd myself; and all night long,
I watch'd and wept and supplicated Heaven,
Till the weak flesh, its life-blood almost drain'd,
Sunk with the long austerity: a dread
Of death came over me; a deathy chill
Ran through my veins, and loosen'd every limb;
Dim grew mine eyes; and I could feel my heart
Dying away within me, intermit
Its slow and feeble throbs, then suddenly
Start, as it seem'd exerting all its force
In one last effort. On the ground I fell,
I know not if entranced, or dead indeed,
But without motion, hearing, sight, or sense,
Feeling, or breath, or life. From that strange state,
Even in such blessed freedom from all pain,
That sure I thought myself in very Heaven,
I woke, and raised my eyelids, and beheld
A light which seemed to penetrate my bones

With life and health. Before me, visible,
Stood Coatlantona ; a wreath of flowers
Circled her hair, and from their odorous leaves
Arose a lambent flame ; not fitfully,
Nor with faint flash or spark of earthly flowers ;
From these, for ever flowing forth, there play'd
In one perpetual dance of pointed light,
The azure radiance of innocuous fire.
She spake. . . Hear, Aztlan ! and give ear, O King !
She said, Not yet the offended Gods relax
Their anger ; they require the Strangers' blood,
The foretaste of their banquet. Let their will
Be known to Aztlan, and the brave perform
Their bidding ; I, meantime, will seek to soothe,
With all a mother's power, Mexitli's wrath.
So let the Maidens daily with fresh flowers
Garland my temple ! . . Daily with fresh flowers
Garland her temple, Aztlan ! and revere
The gentle mother of thy guardian God !

And let the brave, exclaim'd young Tlalala,
Perform her bidding ! Servant of the Gods,
Declare their will ! . . Is it, that I should seek
The Strangers, in the first who meets my way
To plunge the holy weapon ? Say thou to me
Do this ; . . and I depart to do the deed,
Though my life-blood should mingle with the foe's.

O brave young Chief ! Tezozomoc replied,
With better fortune may the grateful Gods
Reward thy valour ! deed so hazardous
They ask not. Couldst thou from the mountain holds
Tempt one of these rash foemen to pursue
Thine artful flight, an ambush'd band might rise
Upon the unsuspecting enemy,
And intercept his way ; then hitherward
The captive should be led, and Aztlan's Gods
On their own altars see the sacrifice,
Well pleased, and Aztlan's sons, inspirited,
Behold the omen of assured success.
Thou know'st that Tlaloc's annual festival
Is close at hand. A Stranger's child would prove
A victim, whose rare value would deserve
His certain favour. More I need not say.
Choose thou the force for ambush ; and thyself
Alone, or with a chosen comrade, seek
The mountain dwellers.
Instant as he ceased,
Ocellopan began ; I go with thee,
O Tlalala ! My friend ! . . If one alone
Could have the honour of this enterprize,
My love might yield it thee ; . . but thou wilt need
A comrade. . . Tlalala, I go with thee !
Whom, the Chief answer'd, should my heart select,
Its tried companion else, but thee, so oft
My brother in the battle ? We will go,
Shedder of blood ! together will we go,
Now, ere the midnight !
Nay ! the Priest replied,
A little while delay, and ere ye go,
Devote yourselves to Heaven ! Feebly he spake
Like one exhausted ; gathering then new force,
As with laborious effort, he pursued, . .
Bedew Mexitli's altar with your blood,
And go beneath his guidage. I have yet
Strength to officiate, and to bless your zeal.

So saying, to the Temple of the God
He led the way. The warriors follow'd him;
And with his chiefs, Coanocotzin went,
To grace with all solemnity the rite.
They pass the Wall of Serpents, and ascend
The massive fabric; four times they surround
Its ample square, the fifth they reach the height.
There, on the level top, two temple-towers
Were rear'd; the one Tezcalipoca's fane,
Supreme of Heaven, where now the wily Priest
Stood, watchful for his presence, and observed
The maize-strewn threshold. His the other pile,
By whose peculiar power and patronage
Aztlan was blest, Mexitli, woman-born.
Before the entrance, the eternal fire
Was burning; bare of foot they enter'd there.

On a blue throne, with four huge silver snakes,
As if the keepers of the sanctuary,
Circled, with stretching neck and fangs display'd,
Mexitli sate: another graven snake
Belted with scales of gold his monster bulk.
Around the neck a loathsome collar hung,
Of human hearts; the face was mask'd with gold,
His specular eyes seem'd fire; one hand uprear'd
A club, the other, as in battle, held
The shield; and over all suspended hung
The banner of the nation. They beheld
In awe, and knelt before the Terrible God.

Guardian of Aztlan! cried Tezozomoc,
Who to thy mortal mother hast assign'd
The kingdom o'er all trees and arborets,
And herbs and flowers, giving her endless life,
A Deity among the Deities;
While Coatlantona implores thy love
To thine own people, they in fear approach
Thy aweful fane, who know no fear beside,
And offer up the worthiest sacrifice,
The blood of heroes!
To the ready Chiefs
He turn'd, and said, Now stretch your arms, and make
The offering to the God. They their bare arms
Stretch'd forth, and stabb'd them with the aloe-point.
Then, in a golden vase, Tezozomoc
Received the mingled streams, and held it up
Toward the giant Idol, and exclaim'd,
Terrible God! Protector of our realm!
Receive thine incense! Let the steam of blood
Ascend to thee, delightful! So mayest thou
Still to thy chosen people lend thine aid;
And these blaspheming strangers from the earth
Be swept away; as erst the monster race
Of Mammuth, Heaven's fierce ministers of wrath,
Who drain'd the lakes in thirst, and for their food
Exterminated nations. And as when,
Their dreadful ministry of death fulfill'd,
Ipalnemoani, by whom we live,
Bade thee go forth, and with thy lightnings fill
The vault of Heaven, and with thy thunders rock
The rooted earth, till of the monster race
Only their monumental bones remain'd, . .
So arm thy favour'd people with thy might,
Terrible God! and purify the land
From these blaspheming foes!
He said, and gave
Ocellopan the vase. . . Chiefs, ye have pour'd
Your strength and courage to the Terrible God,

Devoted to his service; take ye now
The beverage he hath hallow'd. In your youth
Ye have quaff'd manly blood, that manly thoughts
Might ripen in your hearts; so now with this,
Which mingling from such noble veins hath flowed,
Increase of valour drink, and added force.
Ocellopan received the bloody vase,
And drank, and gave in silence to his friend
The consecrated draught; then Tlalala
Drain'd off the offering. Braver blood than this
My lips can never taste! quoth he; but soon
Grant me, Mexitli, a more grateful cup,..
The Stranger's life!
Are all the rites perform'd?
Ocellopan enquired. Yea, all is done,
Answer'd the Priest. Go! and the guardian God
Of Aztlan be your guide!
They left the fane.
Lo! as Tezozomoc was passing by
The eternal fire, the eternal fire shot up
A long blue flame. He started; he exclaim'd,
The God! the God! Tezcalipoca's Priest
Echoed the welcome cry, The God! the God!
For lo! his footsteps mark the maize-strewn floor.
A mighty shout from all the multitudes
Of Aztlan rose; they cast into the fire
The victims, whose last shrieks of agony
Mingled unheeded with the cries of joy.
Then louder from the spiral sea-shell's depth
Swell'd the full roar, and from the hollow wood
Peal'd deeper thunders. Round the choral band,
The circling nobles, gay with gorgeous plumes,
And gems which sparkled to the midnight fire,
Moved in the solemn dance; each in his hand,
In measured movements lifts the feathery shield,
And shakes a rattling ball to measured sounds.
With quicker steps, the inferior chiefs without,
Equal in number, but in just array,
The spreading radii of the mystic wheel,
Revolve; and, outermost, the youths roll round,
In motions rapid as their quicken'd blood.
So thus with song and harmony the night
Pass'd on in Aztlan, and all hearts rejoiced.

XI. THE CAPTURE

Meantime from Aztlan, on their enterprize,
Shedder of Blood and Tiger of the War,
Ocellopan and Tlalala set forth.
With chosen followers, through the silent night,
Silent they travell'd on. After a way
Circuitous and far through lonely tracks,
They reach'd the mountains, and amid the shade
Of thickets covering the uncultured slope,
Their patient ambush placed. The chiefs alone
Held on, till winding in ascent they reach'd
The heights which o'er the Briton's mountain hold
Impended; there they stood, and by the moon
Who yet, with undiminished lustre, hung
High in the dark blue firmament, from thence
Explored the steep descent. Precipitous
The rock beneath them lay, a sudden cliff
Bare and unbroken; in its midway holes,
Where never hand could reach, nor eye intrude,
The eagle built her eyrie. Farther on,

Its interrupted crags and ancient woods
Offered a difficult way. From crag to crag,
By rocky shelf, by trunk, or root, or bough,
A painful toil and perilous they pass'd;
And now, stretch'd out amid the matted shrubs,
Which, at the entrance of the valley, clothed
The rugged bank, they crouch'd.
By this the stars
Grew dim; the glow-worm hath put out her lamp;
The owls have ceased their night song. On the top
Of yon magnolia the loud turkey's voice
Is heralding the dawn; from tree to tree
Extends the wakening watch-note, far and wide,
Till the whole woodlands echo with the cry.
Now breaks the morning; but as yet no foot
Hath mark'd the dews, nor sound of man is heard.
Then first Ocellopan beheld, where near,
Beneath the shelter of a half-roof'd hut,
A sleeping Stranger lay. He pointed him
To Tlalala. The Tiger look'd around:
None else was nigh. . . Shall I descend, he said,
And strike him? here is none to see the deed.
We offered to the Gods our mingled blood
Last night; and now, I deem it, they present
An offering which shall more propitiate them,
And omen sure success. I will go down
And kill!
He said, and, gliding like a snake,
Where Caradoc lay sleeping made his way.
Sweetly slept he, and pleasant were his dreams
Of Britain, and the blue-eyed maid he loved.
The Azteca stood over him; he knew
His victim, and the power of vengeance gave
Malignant joy. Once hast thou 'scaped my arm:
But what shall save thee now? the Tiger thought,
Exulting; and he raised his spear to strike.
That instant, o'er the Briton's unseen harp
The gale of morning pass'd, and swept its strings
Into so sweet a harmony, that sure
It seem'd no earthly tone. The savage man
Suspends his stroke; he looks astonish'd round;
No human hand is near: . . . and hark! again
The aërial music swells and dies away.
Then first the heart of Tlalala felt fear:
He thought that some protecting spirit watch'd
Beside the Stranger, and, abash'd, withdrew.

A God protects him! to Ocellopan,
Whispering, he said. Didst thou not hear the sound
Which enter'd into me, and fix'd my arm
Powerless above him?
Was it not a voice
From thine own Gods to strengthen thee, replied
His sterner comrade, and make evident
Their pleasure in the deed?
Nay! Tlalala
Rejoin'd; they speak in darkness and in storms:
The thunder is their voice, that peals through heaven,
Or, rolling underneath us, makes earth rock
In tempest, and destroys the sons of men.
It was no sound of theirs, Ocellopan!
No voice to hearten, . . for I felt it pass
Unmanning every limb; yea, it relax'd
The sinews of my soul. Shedder of Blood,
I cannot lift my hand against the man.
Go, if thy heart be stronger!
But meantime
Young Caradoc arose, of his escape

Unconscious; and by this the stirring sounds
Of day began, increasing now, as all
Now to their toil betake them. Some go fell
The stately tree; some from the trunk low-laid
Hew the huge boughs; here round the fire they char
The stake-points; here they level with a line
The ground-plot, and infix the ready piles,
Or, interknitting them with osiers, weave
The wicker wall; others along the lake,
From its shoal waters gather reeds and canes, . .
Light roofing, suited to the genial sky.
The woodman's measured stroke, the regular saw,
The wain slow-creaking and the voice of man
Answering his fellow, or, in single toil,
Cheering his labour with a cheerful song,
Strange concert made to those fierce Aztecas,
Who, beast-like, in their silent lurking place
Couch'd close and still, observant for their prey.

All overseeing, and directing all,
From place to place moved Madoc, and beheld
The dwellings rise. Young Hoel at his side
Ran on, best pleased when at his Uncle's side
Courting indulgent love. And now they came
Beside the half-roof'd hut of Caradoc;
Of all the mountain-dwellings, that the last.
The little boy, in boyish wantonness,
Would quit his Uncle's hold, and haste away,
With childhood's frolic speed, then laugh aloud,
To tempt pursuit, now running to the huts,
Now toward the entrance of the valley straits.
But wheresoe'er he turned, Ocellopan
With hunter's-eye pursued his heedless course,
In breath-suspending vigilance. Ah me!
The little wretch toward his lurking-place
Draws near, and calls on Madoc; and the Prince
Thinks of no danger nigh, and follows not
The childish lure! nearer the covert now
Young Hoel runs, and stops, and calls again;
Then, like a lion, from his couching place
Ocellopan leapt forth, and seized his prey.

Loud shriek'd the affrighted child, as in his arms
The savage grasp'd him; startled at the cry,
Madoc beheld him hastening through the pass.
Quick as instinctive love can urge his feet
He follows, and he now almost hath reach'd
The incumber'd ravisher, and hope inspires
New speed, . . yet nearer now, and nearer still,
And lo! the child holds out his little arms!
That instant, as the Prince almost had laid
His hand upon the boy, young Tlalala
Leapt on his neck, and soon, though Madoc's strength
With frantic fury shook him from his hold,
Far down the steep Ocellopan had fled.
Ah! what avails it now, that they, by whom
Madoc was standing to survey their toil,
Have miss'd their Chief, and spread the quick alarm?

What now avails it, that with distant aid,
His gallant men come down? Regarding nought
But Hoel, but the wretched Llaian's grief,
He rushes on; and ever as he draws
Near to the child, the Tiger Tlalala
Impedes his way; and now they reach the place
Of ambush, and the ambush'd band arise,
And Madoc is their prisoner.
Caradoc,
In vain thou leadest on the late pursuit!
In vain, Cadwallon, hath thy love alarm'd
Caught the first sound of evil! They pour out
Tumultuous from the vale, a half-arm'd troop;
Each with such weapons as his hasty hand
Can seize, they rush to battle. Gallant men,
Your valour boots not! It avails not now,
With such fierce onset that ye charge the foe,
And drive with such full force the weapon home!
They, while ye slaughter them, impede pursuit,
And far away, meantime, their comrades bear
The captive Prince. In vain his noble heart
Swells now with wild and suffocating rage;
In vain he struggles: . . they have bound his limbs
With the tough osier, and his struggles now
But bind more close and cuttingly the band.
They hasten on; and while they bear the prize,
Leaving their ill-doom'd fellows in the fight
To check pursuit, foremost afar of all,
With unabating strength by joy inspired
Ocellopan to Aztlan bears the child.

XII. HOEL

Good tidings travel fast. . . The chief is seen;
He hastens on; he holds the child on high;
He shouts aloud. Through Aztlan spreads the news;
Each to his neighbour tells the happy tale, . .
Joy, . . joy to Aztlan! the blood-shedder comes!
Tlaloc has given his victim.
Ah, poor child!
They from the gate swarm out to welcome thee,
Warriors, and men grown grey, and youths and maids,
Exulting, forth they crowd. The mothers throng
To view thee, and, while thinking of thy doom,
They clasp their own dear infants to the breast
With deeper love, delighted think that thou
Shalt suffer for them. He, poor child, admires
The strange array! with wonder he beholds
Their olive limbs, half bare, their plumy crowns,
And gazes round and round, where all was new,
Forgetful of his fears. But when the Priest
Approach'd to take him from the Warrior's arms,
Then Hoel scream'd, and from that hideous man
Averting, to Ocellopan he turn'd,
And would have clung to him, so dreadful late,
Stern as he was, and terrible of eye,
Less dreadful than the Priest, whose dark aspect
Which nature with her harshest characters
Had featured, art made worse. His cowl was white;
His untrimm'd hair, a long and loathsome mass,

With cotton cords intwisted, clung with gum,
And matted with the blood, which, every morn,
He from his temples drew before the God,
In sacrifice; bare were his arms, and smear'd
Black. But his countenance a stronger dread
Than all the horrors of that outward garb,
Struck with quick instinct to young Hoel's heart;
It was a face, whose settled sullenness
No gentle feeling ever had disturb'd;
Which, when he probed a victim's living breast,
Retained its hard composure.
Such was he
Who took the son of Llaian, heeding not
His cries and screams, and arms, in suppliant guise,
Stretch'd out to all around, and struglings vain.
He to the temple of the Water-God
Convey'd his victim. By the threshold, there
The ministering Virgins stood, a comely band
Of high-born damsels, to the temple rites
By pious parents vow'd. Gladly to them
The little Hoel leapt; their gentle looks
No fear excited; and he gazed around,
Pleased and surprised, unconscious to what end
These things were tending. O'er the rush-strewn floor
They to the azure Idol led the boy,
Now not reluctant, and they raised the hymn.

God of the Waters! at whose will the streams
Flow in their wonted channel, and diffuse
Their plenty round, the blood and life of earth;
At whose command they swell, and o'er their banks
Burst with resistless ruin, making vain
The toils and hopes of man, . . behold this child!
O strong to bless, and mighty to destroy,
Tlaloc! behold thy victim! so mayest thou
Restrain the peaceful streams within their banks,
And bless the labours of the husbandman.

God of the Mountains! at whose will the clouds
Cluster around the heights; who sendest them
To shed their fertilizing showers, and raise
The drooping herb, and o'er the thirsty vale
Spread their green freshness; at whose voice the hills
Grow black with storms; whose wrath the thunder speaks,
Whose bow of anger shoots the lightning shafts,
To blast the works of man; . . behold this child!
O strong to bless, and mighty to destroy,
Tlaloc! behold thy victim! so mayest thou
Lay by the fiery arrows of thy rage,
And bid the genial rains and dews descend.

O thou, Companion of the powerful God,
Companion and Beloved! . . when he treads
The mountain-top, whose breath diffuses round
The sweets of summer; when he rides the waves,
Whose presence is the sunshine and the calm, . .
Aiauh, O green-robed Goddess, see this child!
Behold thy victim! so mayest thou appease
The sterner mind of Tlaloc when he frowns,
And Aztlan flourish in thy fostering smile.
Young Spirits! ye whom Aztlan's piety
Hath given to Tlaloc, to enjoy with him,
For aye, the cool delights of Tlalocan, . .
Young Spirits of the happy; who have left

Your Heaven to-day, unseen assistants here, . .
Behold your comrade! see the chosen child,
Who through the lonely cave of death must pass,
Like you, to join you in eternal joy.

Now from the rush-strewn temple they depart.
They place their smiling victim in a car,
Upon whose sides of pearly shell there play'd,
Shading and shifting still, the rainbow light.
On virgin shoulders is he borne aloft,
With dance before, and song and music round;
And thus they seek, in festival array,
The water-side. There lies the sacred bark,
All gay with gold, and garlanded with flowers:
The virgins with the joyous boy embark;
Ten boatmen urge them on; the Priests behind
Follow, and all the long solemnity.
The lake is overspread with boats; the sun
Shines on the gilded prows, the feathery crowns,
The sparkling waves. Green islets float along,
Where high-born damsels, under jasmin bowers,
Raise the sweet voice, to which the echoing oars,
In modulated motion, rise and fall.
The moving multitude along the shore
Flows like a stream; bright shines the unclouded sky;
Heaven, earth, and waters wear one face of joy.
Young Hoel with delight beholds the pomp;
His heart throbs joyfully; and if he thinks
Upon his mother now, 'tis but to think
How beautiful a tale for her glad ear
He hath when he returns. Meantime the maids
Weave garlands for his head, and raise the song.

Oh! happy thou, whom early from the world
The Gods require! not by the wasting worm
Of sorrow canker'd, nor condemn'd to feel
The pang of sickness, nor the wound of war,
Nor the long miseries of protracted age;
But thus in childhood chosen of the God,
To share his joys. Soon shall thy rescued soul,
Child of the Stranger! in his blissful world,
Mix with the blessed spirits; for not thine,
Amid the central darkness of the earth,
To endure the eternal void; . . not thine to live,
Dead to all objects of eye, ear, or sense,
In the long horrors of one endless night,
With endless being curst. For thee the bowers
Of Tlalocan have blossom'd with new sweets;
For thee have its immortal trees matured
The fruits of Heaven; thy comrades even now
Wait thee, impatient, in their fields of bliss;
The God will welcome thee, his chosen child,
And Aiauh love thee with a mother's love.
Child of the Stranger, dreary is thy way!
Darkness and Famine through the cave of Death
Must guide thee. Happy thou, when on that night
The morning of the eternal day shall dawn.

So as they sung young Hoel's song of death,
With rapid strength the boatmen plied their oars,
And through the water swift they glided on,
And now to shore they drew. The stately bank
Rose with the majesty of woods o'erhung,

And rocks, or peering through the forest shade,
Or rising from the lake, and with their bulk
Glassing its dark deep waters. Half way up,
A cavern pierced the rock; no human foot
Had trod its depths, nor ever sunbeam reach'd
Its long recesses and mysterious gloom;
To Tlaloc it was hallowed; and the stone,
Which closed its entrance, never was removed,
Save when the yearly festival return'd,
And in its womb a child was sepulchred,
The living victim. Up the winding path,
That to the entrance of the cavern led,
With many a painful step the train ascend:
But many a time, upon that long ascent,
Young Hoel would have paused, with weariness
Exhausted now. They urge him on, . . poor child!
They urge him on! . . Where is Cadwallon's aid?
Where is the sword of Ririd? where the arm
Of Madoc now? . . Oh! better had he lived,
Unknowing and unknown, on Arvon's plain,
And trod upon his noble father's grave,
With peasant feet, unconscious! . . They have reach'd
The cavern now, and from its mouth the Priests
Roll the huge portal. Thitherward they force
The son of Llaian. A cold air comes out; . .
It chills him, and his feet recoil; . . in vain
His feet recoil; . . in vain he turns to fly,
Affrighted at the sudden gloom that spreads
Around; . . the den is closed, and he is left
In solitude and darkness, . . left to die!

XIII. COATEL

That morn from Aztlan Coatel had gone
In search of flowers, amid the woods and crags,
To deck the shrine of Coatlantona;
Such flowers as in the solitary wilds
Hiding their modest beauty, made their worth
More valued for its rareness. 'Twas to her
A grateful task; not only for she fled
Those cruel rites, to which nor reverent use,
Nor frequent custom could familiarize
Her gentle heart, and teach it to put off
All womanly feeling; . . but that from all eyes
Escaped, and all obtrusive fellowship,
She in that solitude might send her soul
To where Lincoya with the Strangers dwelt.
She from the summit of the woodland heights
Gazed on the lake below. The sound of song
And instrument, in soften'd harmony,
Had reach'd her where she stray'd; and she beheld
The pomp, and listen'd to the floating sounds,
A moment, with delight: but then a fear
Came on her, for she knew with what design
The Tiger and Ocellopan had sought
The dwellings of the Cymry. . . Now the boats
Drew nearer, and she knew the Stranger's child.
She watch'd them land below; she saw them wind
The ascent: . . and now from that abhorred cave
The stone is roll'd away, . . and now the child
From light and life is cavern'd. Coatel
Thought of his mother then, of all the ills
Her fear would augur, and how worse than all
Which even a mother's maddening fear could feign,

His actual fate. She thought of this, and bow'd
Her face upon her knees, and closed her eyes,
Shuddering. Suddenly in the brake beside,
A rustling started her, and from the shrubs
A Vulture rose.
She moved toward the spot,
Led by an idle impulse, as it seem'd,
To see from whence the carrion bird had fled.
The bushes overhung a narrow chasm
Which pierced the hill: upon its mossy sides
Shade-loving herbs and flowers luxuriant grew,
And jutting crags made easy the descent.
A little way descending, Coatel
Stoopt for the flowers, and heard, or thought she heard,
A feeble sound below. She raised her head,
And anxiously she listen'd for the sound,
Not without fear. . . Feebly again, and like
A distant cry, it came; and then she thought,
Perhaps it was the voice of that poor child,
By the slow pain of hunger doom'd to die.
She shudder'd at the thought, and breathed a groan
Of unavailing pity; . . but the sound
Came nearer, and her trembling heart conceived
A dangerous hope. The Vulture from that chasm
Had fled, perchance accustomed in the cave
To seek his banquet, and by living feet
Alarm'd: . . there was an entrance then below;
And were it possible that she could save
The Stranger's child, . . Oh what a joy it were
To tell Lincoya that!
It was a thought
Which made her heart with terror and delight
Throb audibly. From crag to crag she pass'd
Descending, and beheld a narrow cave
Enter the hill. A little way the light
Fell, . . but its feeble glimmering she herself
Obstructed half, as stooping in she went.
The arch grew loftier, and the increasing gloom
Fill'd her with more affright; and now she paused;
For at a sudden and abrupt descent
She stood, and fear'd its unseen depth; her heart
Fail'd, and she back had hasten'd; but the cry
Reach'd her again, the near and certain cry
Of that most pitiable innocent.
Again adown the dark descent she look'd,
Straining her eyes; by this the strengthen'd sight
Had grown adapted to the gloom around,
And her dilated pupils now received
Dim sense of objects near. Something below,
White, in the darkness lay: it mark'd the depth.
Still Coatel stood dubious; but she heard
The wailing of the child, and his loud sobs; . .
Then, clinging to the rock with fearful hands,
Her feet explored below, and twice she felt
Firm footing, ere her fearful hold relax'd.
The sound she made, along the hollow rock
Ran echoing. Hoel heard it, and he came
Groping along the side. A dim, dim light
Broke on the darkness of his sepulchre;
A human form drew near him; . . he sprang on,
Screaming with joy, and clung to Coatel,
And cried, O take me from this dismal place!
She answer'd not; she understood him not;

But clasp'd the little victim to her breast,
And shed delightful tears.
But from that den
Of darkness and of horror, Coatel
Durst not convey the child, though in her heart
There was a female tenderness which yearn'd,
As with maternal love, to cherish him.
She hush'd his clamours, fearful lest the sound
Might reach some other ear; she kissed away
The tears that stream'd adown his little cheeks;
She gave him food which in the morn she brought,
For her own wants, from Aztlan. Some few words
Of Britain's ancient language she had learnt
From her Lincoya, in those happy days
Of peace, when Aztlan was the Stranger's friend:
Aptly she learnt, what willingly he taught,
Terms of endearment, and the parting words
Which promised quick return. She to the child
These precious words address'd; and if it chanced
Imperfect knowledge, or some difficult sound
Check'd her heart's utterance, then the gentle tone,
The fond caress, intelligibly spake
Affection's language.
But when she arose,
And would have climb'd the ascent, the affrighted boy
Fast held her, and his tears interpreted
The prayer to leave him not. Again she kiss'd
His tears away; again of soon return
Assured and soothed him; till reluctantly
And weeping, but in silence, he unloosed
His grasp; and up the difficult ascent
Coatel climb'd, and to the light of day
Returning, with her flowers she hastened home.

XIV. THE STONE OF SACRIFICE

Who comes to Aztlan, bounding like a deer
Along the plain? . . The herald of success;
For lo! his locks are braided, and his loins
Cinctured with white; and see, he lifts the shield,
And brandishes the sword. The populace
Flock round, impatient for the tale of joy,
And follow to the palace in his path.
Joy! joy! the Tiger hath achieved his quest!
They bring a captive home! . . Triumphantly
Coanocotzin and his Chiefs go forth
To greet the youth triumphant, and receive
The victim whom the gracious gods have given,
Sure omen and first fruits of victory.
A woman leads the train, young, beautiful, . .
More beautiful for that translucent joy
Flushing her cheek, and sparkling in her eye; . .
Her hair is twined with festal flowers, her robe
With flowing wreaths adorn'd; she holds a child,
He, too, bedeck'd and garlanded with flowers,
And, lifting him, with agile force of arm,
In graceful action, to harmonious step
Accordant, leads the dance. It is the wife
Of Tlalala, who, with his child, goes forth
To meet her hero husband.
And behold
The Tiger comes! and ere the shouts and sounds
Of gratulation cease, his followers bear
The captive Prince. At that so welcome sight
Loud rose the glad acclaim; nor knew they yet

That he who there lay patient in his bonds,
Expecting the inevitable lot,
Was Madoc. Patient in his bonds he lay,
Exhausted with vain efforts, hopeless now,
And silently resign'd. But when the King
Approach'd the prisoner, and beheld his face,
And knew the Chief of Strangers, at that sound
Electric joy shot through the multitude,
And, like the raging of the hurricane,
Their thundering transports peal'd. A deeper joy,
A nobler triumph kindled Tlalala,
As, limb by limb, his eye survey'd the Prince,
With a calm fierceness. And by this the Priests
Approach'd their victim, clad in vestments white
Of sacrifice, which from the shoulders fell,
As from the breast, unbending, broad and straight,
Leaving their black arms bare. The blood-red robe,
The turquoise pendant from his down-drawn lip,
The crown of glossy plumage, whose green hue
Vied with his emerald ear-drops, mark'd their Chief
Tezozomoc: his thin and ghastly cheek,
Which, . . save the temple serpents, when he brought
Their human banquet, . . never living eye
Rejoiced to see, became more ghastly now,
As in Mexitli's name, upon the Prince
He laid his murtherous hand. But as he spake,
Up darted Tlalala his eagle glance. . .
Away! away! he shall not perish so!
The warrior cried. . . Not tamely, by the knife,
Nor on the jaspar-stone, his blood shall flow!
The Gods of Aztlan love a Warrior Priest!
I am their Priest to-day!
A murmuring
Ran through the train; nor waited he to hear
Denial thence; but on the multitude
Aloud he call'd. . . When first our fathers seized
This land, there was a savage chief who stopt
Their progress. He had gained the rank he bore,
By long probation: stripes, which laid his flesh
All bleeding bare, had forced not one complaint;
Not when the working bowels might be seen,
One movement; hand-bound, he had been confined
Where myriad insects on his nakedness
Infix'd their venomous anger, and no start,
No shudder, shook his frame; last, in a net
Suspended, he had felt the agony
Of fire, which to his bones and marrow pierced,
And breathed the suffocating smoke which fill'd
His lungs with fire, without a groan, a breath,
A look betokening sense; so gallantly
Had he subdued his nature. This brave man
Met Aztlan in the war, and put her Chiefs
To shame. Our Elders have not yet forgot
How from the slaughter'd brother of their King
He stript the skin, and form'd of it a drum,
Whose sound affrighted armies. With this man
My father coped in battle; here he led him,
An offering to the God; and, man to man,
He slew him here in fight. I was a child
Just old enough to lift my father's shield;
But I remember, on that glorious day,
When from the sacred combat he return'd,

His red hands reeking with the hot heart's blood,
How in his arms he took me, and besought
The God whom he had served, to bless his boy,
And make me like my father. Men of Aztlan,
Mexitli heard his prayer; . . Here I have brought
The Stranger-Chief, the noblest sacrifice
That ever graced the altar of the God;
Let then his death be noble! so my boy
Shall, in the day of battle, think of me;
And as I follow'd my brave father's steps,
Pursue my path of glory.
Ere the Priest
Could frame denial, had the Monarch's look
Given his assent. . . Refuse not this, he said,
O servant of the Gods! He hath not here
His arms to save him; and the Tiger's strength
Yields to no mortal might. Then for his sword
He call'd, and bade Yuhidthiton address
The Stranger-Chief.
Yuhidthiton began,
The Gods of Aztlan triumph, and thy blood
Must wet their altars. Prince, thou shalt not die
The coward's death; but, sworded, and in fight,
Fall as becomes the valiant. Should thine arm
Subdue in battle six successive foes,
Life, liberty, and glory, will repay
The noble conquest. Madoc, hope not this:
Strong are the brave of Aztlan!
Then they loosed
The Ocean Chieftain's bonds; they rent away
His garments; and with songs and shouts of joy,
They led him to the Stone of Sacrifice.
Round was that Stone of Blood; the half-raised arm
Of one of manly growth, who stood below,
Might rest upon its height; the circle small,
An active boy might almost bound across.
Nor needed for the combat, ampler space;
For in the centre was the prisoner's foot
Fast fetter'd down. Thus fetter'd Madoc stood.
He held a buckler, light and small, of cane
O'erlaid with beaten gold; his sword, the King,
Honouring a noble enemy, had given,
A weapon tried in war, . . to Madoc's grasp
Strange and unwieldy: 'twas a broad strong staff,
Set thick with transverse stones, on either side
Keen-edged as Syrian steel. But when he felt
The weapon, Madoc call'd to mind his deeds
Done on the Saxon in his fathers' land,
And hope arose within him. Nor though now
Naked he stood, did fear for that assail
His steady heart; for often had he seen
His gallant countrymen with naked breasts,
Rush on their iron-coated enemy,
And win the conquest.
Now hath Tlalala
Array'd himself for battle. First he donn'd
A gipion, quilted close of gossampine;
O'er that a jointed mail of plates of gold,
Bespotted like the tiger's speckled pride,
To speak his rank; it clad his arms half-way,
Half-way his thighs; but cuishes had he none,
Nor gauntlets, nor feet-armour. On his helm
There yawn'd the semblance of a tiger's head,
The long white teeth extended, as for prey;
Proud crest, to blazon his proud title forth.
And now toward the fatal stage, equipp'd

For fight, he went; when, from the press behind,
A warrior's voice was heard, and clad in arms,
And shaking in his angry grasp the sword,
Ocellopan rush'd on, and cried aloud,
And for himself the holy combat claim'd.
The Tiger, heedless of his clamour, sprung
Upon the stone, and turn'd him to the war.
Fierce leaping forward came Ocellopan,
And bounded up the ascent, and seized his arm: . .
Why wouldst thou rob me of a deed like this?
Equal our peril in the enterprize,
Equal our merit; . . thou wouldst reap alone
The guerdon! Never shall my children lift
Their little hands at thee, and say, Lo! there
The Chief who slew the White King! . . Tlalala,
Trust to the lot, or turn on me, and prove,
By the best chance to which the brave appeal,
Who best deserves this glory!
Stung to wrath,
The Tiger answer'd not; he raised his sword,
And they had rush'd to battle; but the Priests
Came hastening up, and by their common Gods,
And by their common country, bade them cease
Their impious strife, and let the lot decide
From whom Mexitli should that day receive
His noble victim. Both unsatisfied,
But both obedient, heard. Two equal shafts,
As outwardly they seem'd, the Paba brought;
His mantle hid their points; and Tlalala
Drew forth the broken stave. A bitter smile
Darken'd his cheek, as angrily he cast
To earth the hostile lot. . . Shedder of Blood,
Thine is the first adventure! he exclaim'd;
But thou mayst perish here! . . and in his heart
The Tiger hoped Ocellopan might fall,
As sullenly retiring from the stage,
He mingled with the crowd.
And now opposed
In battle, on the Stone of Sacrifice,
Prince Madoc and the Life-Destroyer stood.
This clad in arms complete, free to advance
In quick assault, or shun the threaten'd blow,
Wielding his wonted sword; the other, stript,
Save of that fragile shield, of all defence;
His weapon strange and cumbrous; and pinn'd down,
Disabled from all onset, all retreat.

With looks of greedy joy, Ocellopan
Survey'd his foe, and wonder'd to behold
The breast so broad, the bare and brawny limbs,
Of matchless strength. The eye of Madoc, too,
Dwelt on his foe; his countenance was calm,
Something more pale than wonted; like a man
Prepared to meet his death. The Azteca
Fiercely began the fight; now here, now there,
Aright, aleft, above, below, he wheel'd
The rapid sword: still Madoc's rapid eye
Pursued the motion, and his ready shield,
In prompt interposition, caught the blow,
Or turn'd its edge aside. Nor did the Prince
Yet aim the sword to wound, but held it forth,
Another shield, to save him, ti'l his hand,

Familiar with its weight and shape uncouth,
Might wield it well to vengeance. Thus he stood,
Baffling the impatient enemy, who now
Wax'd wrathful, thus to waste in idle strokes
Reiterate so oft, his bootless strength.
And now yet more exasperate he grew;
For, from the eager multitude, was heard,
Amid the din of undistinguish'd sounds,
The Tiger's murmur'd name, as though they thought,
Had he been on the Stone, ere this, besure,
The Gods had tasted of their sacrifice,
Now all too long delay'd. Then fiercelier,
And yet more rapidly, he drove the sword;
But still the wary Prince or met its fall,
And broke the force, or bent him from the blow;
And now retiring, and advancing now,
As one free foot permitted, still provoked,
And baffled still the savage; and sometimes,
With cautious strength did Madoc aim attack,
Mastering each moment now with abler sway
The acquainted sword. But, though as yet unharm'd
In life or limb, more perilous the strife
Grew momently; for with repeated strokes,
Battered and broken now, the shield hung loose;
And shouts of triumph from the multitude
Arose, as piece-meal they beheld it fall,
And saw the Prince exposed.
That welcome sight,
Those welcome sounds, inspired Ocellopan;
He felt each limb new-strung. Impatient now
Of conquest long delay'd, with wilder rage
He drives the weapon; Madoc's lifted sword
Received its edge, and shiver'd with the blow.
A shriek of transport burst from all around;
For lo! the White King, shieldless, weaponless,
Naked before his foe! That savage foe,
Dallying with the delight of victory,
Drew back a moment to enjoy the sight,
Then yell'd in triumph, and sprang on to give
The consummating blow. Madoc beheld
The coming death; he darted up his hand
Instinctively to save, and caught the wrist
In its mid fall, and drove with desperate force
The splinter'd truncheon of his broken sword
Full in the enemy's face. Beneath his eye
It broke its way, and where the nasal nerves
Branch in fine fibrils o'er their mazy seat,
Burst through, and slanting upward in the brain
Buried its jagged point.
Madoc himself
Stood at his fall astonished, at escape
Unhoped, and strange success. The multitude
Beheld, and they were silent, and they stood
Gazing in terror. But far other thought.
Rose in the Tiger's heart; it was a joy
To Tlalala; and forth he sprung, and up
The Stone of Sacrifice, and call'd aloud
To bring the Prince another sword and shield,
For his last strife. Then in that interval,
Upon Ocellopan he fix'd his eyes,
Contemplating the dead, as though thereby
To kindle in his heart a fiercer thirst

For vengeance. Nor to Madoc was the sting
Of anger wanting, when in Tlalala
He knew the captive whom his mercy freed,
The man whose ambush had that day destroy'd
Young Hoel and himself; . . for, sure, he deem'd
Young Hoel was with God, and he himself
At his death day arrived. And now he graspt
A second sword, and held another shield;
And from the Stone of Blood Ocellopan
Was borne away; and, fresh in arms, and fierce
With all that makes a savage thirst for war,
Hope, vengeance, courage, superstitious hate,
A second foe came on. By this the Prince
Could wield his weapon well; and dreading now
Lest, in protracted combat, he might stand
Again defenceless, he put forth his strength,
As oft assailing as assail'd, and watch'd
So well the Tiger's motions, and received
The Tiger's blows so warily, and aimed
His own so fierce and fast, that in the crowd
Doubt and alarm prevail'd. Ilanquel grew
Pale at her husband's danger; and she clasp'd
The infant to her breast, whom late she held
On high, to see his victory. The throng
Of the beholders silently look'd on;
And in their silence might at times be heard
An indrawn breath of terror; and the Priests
Angrily murmur'd, that in evil hour,
Coanocotzin had indulged the pride
Of vaunting valour, and from certain death
Reprieved the foe.

But now a murmur rose
Amid the multitude; and they who stood
So thickly throng'd, and with such eager eyes
Late watch'd the fight, hastily now broke up,
And, with disorder'd speed and sudden arms,
Ran to the city gates. More eager now,
Conscious of what had chanced, fought Tlalala;
And hope invigorated Madoc's heart;
For well he ween'd Cadwallon was at hand,
Leading his gallant friends. Aright he ween'd;
At hand Cadwallon was! His gallant friends
Came from the mountains with impetuous speed,
To save or to revenge. Nor long endured
The combat now: the Priests ascend the stone,
And bid the Tiger hasten to defend
His country and his Gods; and, hand and foot,
Binding the captive Prince, they bear him thence
And lay him in the temple. Then his heart
Resign'd itself to death, and Madoc thought
Of Llaian and Goervyl: and he felt
That death was dreadful. But not so the King
Permitted; but not so had Heaven decreed;
For noble was the King of Aztlan's heart,
And pure his tongue from falsehood: he had said,
That by the warrior's death should Madoc die;
Nor dared the Pabas violently break
The irrevocable word. There Madoc lay
In solitude; the distant battle reach'd
His ear; inactive and in bonds he lay
Expecting the dread issue, and almost
Wish'd for the perils of the fight again.

XV. THE BATTLE

Not unprepared Cadwallon found the sons
Of Aztlan, nor defenceless were her walls;
But when the Britons' distant march was seen,
A ready army issued from her gates,
And dight themselves to battle: these the King
Coanocotzin had, with timely care,
And provident for danger, thus array'd.
Forth issuing from the gates, they met the foe,
And with the sound of sonorous instruments,
And with their shouts and screams and yells, drove back
The Britons' fainter war-cry, as the swell
Of ocean, flowing onward, up its course
Repels the river-stream. Their darts and stones
Fell like the rain drops of the summer-shower,
So fast, and on the helmet and the shield,
On the strong corselet and the netted mail,
So innocent they fell. But not in vain
The bowmen of Deheubarth sent, that day,
Their iron bolts abroad; those volant deaths
Descended on the naked multitude,
And through the chieftain's quilted gossampine,
Through feathery breastplate and effulgent gold,
They reach'd the life.
But soon no interval
For archer's art was left, nor scope for flight
Of stone from whirling sling: both hosts, alike
Impatient for the proof of war, press on;
The Aztecas, to shun the arrowy storm,
The Cymry, to release their Lord, or heap
Aztlan in ruins, for his monument.
Spear against spear, and shield to shield, and breast
To breast they met; equal in force of limb
And strength of heart, in resolute resolve,
And stubborn effort of determined wrath:
The few, advantaged by their iron mail;
The weaklier arm'd, of near retreat assured
And succour close at hand, in tenfold troops
Their foemen overnumbering. And of all
That mighty multitude, did every man
Of either host, alike inspired by all
That stings to will and strengthens to perform,
Then put forth all his power; for well they knew
Aztlan that day must triumph or must fall.
Then sword and mace on helm and buckler rang,
And hurtling javelins whirr'd along the sky.
Nor when they hurled the javelin, did the sons
Of Aztlan, prodigal of weapons, loose
The lance, to serve them for no second stroke;
A line of ample measure still retain'd
The missile shaft; and when its blow was spent,
Swiftly the dexterous spearman coiled the string,
And sped again the artificer of death.
Rattling, like summer hailstones, they descend,
But from the Britons' iron panoply,
Baffled and blunted, fell; nor more avail'd
The stony falchion there, whose broken edge
Inflicts no second wound; nor profited,
On the strong buckler or the crested helm,
The knotty club; though fast, in blinding showers,
Those javelins fly, those heavy weapons fall
With stunning weight. Meantime with wonted strength,
The men of Gwyneth through their fenceless foes

Those lances thrust, whose terrors had so oft
Affray'd the Saxons, and whose home-driven points,
So oft had pierced the Normen's knightly arms.
Little did then his pomp of plumes bestead
The Azteca, or glittering pride of gold,
Against the temper'd sword; little his casque,
Gay with its feathery coronal, or drest
In graven terrors, when the Briton's hand
Drove in through helm and head the short-spiked mace:
Or swung its iron weights with shattering sway,
Which where they struck destroyed. Beneath those arms
The men of Aztlan fell; and whoso dropt
Dead or disabled, him his comrades bore
Away with instant caution, lest the sight
Of those whom they had slaughter'd might inspire
The foe with hope and courage. Fast they fell,
And fast were resupplied, man after man
Succeeding to the death. Nor in the town
Did now the sight of their slain countrymen,
Momentarily carried in and piled in heaps,
Awake one thought of fear. Hark! through the streets
Of Aztlan, how from house to house, and tower
To tower, reiterate, Paynalton's name
Calls all her sons to battle! at whose name
All must go forth, and follow to the field
The Leader of the Armies of the Gods,
Whom, in his unseen power, Mexitli now
Sends out to lead his people. They, in crowds,
Throng for their weapons to the House of Arms,
Beneath their guardian Deity preserved,
Through years of peace; and there the Pabas stood
Within the temple-court, and dealt around
The ablution of the Stone of Sacrifice,
Bidding them, with the holy beverage,
Imbibe diviner valour, strength of arm
Not to be wearied, hope of victory,
And certain faith of endless joy in Heaven,
Their sure reward. . . Oh! happy, cried the Priests,
Your brethren who have fallen! already they
Have join'd the company of blessed souls;
Already they, with song and harmony,
And in the dance of beauty, are gone forth,
To follow down his western path of light
Yon Sun, the Prince of Glory, from the world
Retiring to the Palace of his rest.
Oh, happy they, who for their country's cause,
And for their Gods, shall die the brave man's death!
Them will their country consecrate with praise,
Them will the Gods reward! . . They heard the Priests
Intoxicate, and from the gate swarm'd out,
Tumultuous to the fight of martyrdom.

But when Cadwallon every moment saw
The enemies increase, and with what rage
Of drunken valour to the fight they rush'd,
He, against that impetuous attack,
As best he could, providing, form'd the troops
Of Britain into one collected mass:
Three equal sides it offered to the foe,
Close and compact; no multitude could break
The condensed strength: its narrow point prest on,
Entering the throng's resistance, like a wedge,
Still from behind impell'd. So thought the Chief
Likeliest the gates of Aztlan might be gain'd,

And Hoel and the Prince preserved, if yet
They were among mankind. Nor could the force
Of hostile thousands break that strength condensed,
Against whose iron sides the stream of war
Roll'd unavailing, as the ocean waves,
Which idly round some insulated rock
Foam furious, warning with their silvery smoke
The mariner far off. Nor could the point
Of that compacted body, though it bore
Right on the foe, and with united force
Press'd on to enter, through the multitude
Win now its difficult way; as where the sea
Pours through some strait its violent waters, swoln
By inland fresh, vainly the oarmen there
With all their weight and strength essay to drive
Their galley through the pass, the stress and strain
Availing scarce to stem the impetuous stream.

And hark! above the deafening din of fight
Another shout, heard like the thunder-peal,
Amid the war of winds! Lincoya comes,
Leading the mountain-dwellers. From the shock
Aztlan recoil'd. And now a second troop
Of Britons to the town advanced, for war
Impatient and revenge. Cadwallon these,
With tidings of their gallant Prince enthrall'd,
Had summon'd from the ships. That dreadful tale
Roused them to fury. Not a man was left
To guard the fleet; for who could have endured
That idle duty? who could have endured
The long, inactive, miserable hours,
And hope and expectation and the rage
Of maddening anguish? Ririd led them on;
In whom a brother's love had call'd not up
More spirit-stirring pain, than trembled now
In every British heart; so dear to all
Was Madoc. On they came; and Aztlan then
Had fled appall'd; but in that dangerous hour
Her faith preserved her. From the gate her Priests
Rush'd desperate out, and to the foremost rank
Forced their wild way, and fought with martyr zeal.
Through all the host contagious fury spread:
Nor had the sight that hour enabled them
To mightier efforts, had Mexitli, clad
In all his imaged terrors, gone before
Their way, and driven upon his enemies
His giant club destroying. Then more fierce
The conflict grew; the din of arms, the yell
Of savage rage, the shriek of agony,
The groan of death, commingled in one sound
Of undistinguished horrors; while the Sun,
Retiring slow beneath the plain's far verge,
Shed o'er the quiet hills his fading light.

XVI. THE WOMEN

SILENT and solitary is thy vale,
Caermadoc, and how melancholy now
That solitude and silence! . . Broad noon-day,
And not a sound of human life is there!
The fisher's net, abandon'd in his haste,
Sways idly in the waters; in the tree,
Where its last stroke had pierced, the hatchet hangs:
The birds, beside the mattock and the spade,
Hunt in the new-turn'd mould, and fearlessly

Fly through the cage-work of the imperfect wall;
Or through the vacant dwelling's open door,
Pass and repass secure.
In Madoc's house,
And on his bed of reeds, Goervyl lies,
Her face toward the ground. She neither weeps,
Nor sighs, nor groans; too strong her agony
For outward sign of anguish, and for prayer
Too hopeless was the ill; and though, at times,
The pious exclamation pass'd her lips,
Thy will be done! yet was that utterance
Rather the breathing of a broken heart,
Than of a soul resign'd. Mervyn beside
Hangs over his dear mistress silently,
Having no hope or comfort to bestow,
Nor aught but sobs and unavailing tears.
The women of Caermadoc, like a flock
Collected in their panic, stand around
The house of their lost leader; and they too
Are mute in their despair. Llaian alone
Is absent; wildly hath she wander'd forth
To seek her child, and such the general woe,
That none hath mark'd her absence. Yet have they,
Though unprotected thus, no selfish fear;
The sudden evil hath destroyed all thought,
All sense of present danger to themselves,
All foresight.
Yet new terrors! Malinal,
Panting with speed, bursts in, and takes the arms
Of Madoc down. Goervyl, at that sound,
Started in sudden hope; but when she saw
The Azteca, she uttered a faint scream
Of wrongful fear, remembering not the proofs
Of his tried truth, nor recognizing aught
In those known features, save their hostile hue.
But he, by worser fear abating soon
Her vain alarm, exclaim'd, I saw a band
Of Hoamen coming up the straits, for ill,
Besure, for Amalahta leads them on.
Buckle this harness on, that, being arm'd,
I may defend the entrance.
Scarce had she
Fastened the breast-plate with her trembling hands,
When, flying from the sight of men in arms,
The women crowded in. Hastily he seized
The shield and spear, and on the threshold took
His stand; but, waken'd now to provident thought,
Goervyl, following, helm'd him. There was now
No time to gird the bauldric on; she held
Her brother's sword, and bade him look to her
For prompt supply of weapons; in herself
Being resolved not idly to abide,
Nor unprepared of hand or heart to meet
The issue of the danger, nor to die
Reluctant now.
Rightly had they divined
The Hoamen's felon purpose. When he heard
The fate of Madoc, from his mother's eye
He mask'd his secret joy, and took his arms,
And to the rescue, with the foremost band,
Set forth. But soon, upon the way, he told
The associates of his crime, that now their hour
Of triumph was arrived; Caermadoc, left
Defenceless, would become, with all its wealth,
The spoiler's easy prey, raiment and arms
And iron; skins of that sweet beverage,
Which to a sense of its own life could stir
The joyful blood; the women above all,

Whom to the forest they might bear away,
To be their slaves, if so their pleasure was;
Or, yielding them to Aztlan, for such prize
Receive a royal guerdon. Twelve there were,
Long leagued with him in guilt, who turn'd aside:
And they have reach'd Caermadoc now, and now
Rush onward, where they see the women fly;
When, on the threshold, clad in Cimbric arms,
And with long lance protended, Malinal
Rebuffs them from the entrance. At that sight
Suddenly quail'd, they stood, as midnight thieves
Who find the master waking; but ere long,
Gathering a boastful courage, as they saw
No other guard, press'd forward, and essay'd
To turn his spear aside. Its steady point,
True to the impelling strength, held on, and thrust
The foremost through the breast, and breath and blood
Followed the re-drawn shaft. Nor seem'd the strife
Unequal now, though with their numbers, they
Beleaguer'd in half-ring the door, where he,
The sole defender, stood. From side to side,
So well and swiftly did he veer the lance,
That every enemy beheld its point
Aim'd at himself direct. But chief on one
Had Malinal his deadly purpose fix'd,
On Amalahta; by his death to quell
The present danger, and cut off the root
Of many an evil, certain else to spring
From that accursed stock. On him his eye
Turn'd with more eager wilfulness, and dwelt
With keener ken; and now, with sudden step
Bending his body on, at him he drives
The meditated blow: but that ill Prince,
As chiefly sought, so chiefly fearing, swerved
Timely aside; and ere the Azteca
Recovered from the frustrate aim, the spear
Was seized, and from his hold, by stress and weight
Of numbers wrench'd. He, facing still the foe,
And holding at arm's length the targe, put back
His hand, and called Goervyl, and from her
Received the sword: . . in time, for the enemy
Prest on so near, that having now no scope
To raise his arm, he drove the blade straight on.
It entered at the mouth of one who stood
With face aslant, and glanced along the teeth
Through to the ear, then, slivering downward, left
The cheek-flap dangling. He, in that same point
Of time, as if a single impulse gave
Birth to the double action, dash'd his shield
Against another's head, with so fierce swing
And sway of strength, that this third enemy
Fell at his feet. Astounded by such proof
Of prowess, and by unexpected loss
Dismay'd, the foe gave back, beyond the reach
Of his strong arm; and there awhile they stood,
Beholding him at bay, and counselling
How best to work their vengeance upon him,
Their sole opponent. Soon did they behold

The vantage, overlook'd by hasty hope,
How vulnerable he stood, his arms and thighs
Bare for their butt. At once they bent their bows;
At once ten arrows fled; seven, shot in vain,
Rung on his shield; but, with unhappier mark,
Two shafts hung quivering in his leg; a third
Below the shoulder pierced. Then Malinal
Groan'd, not for anguish of his wounds, but grief
And agony of spirit; yet resolved
To his last gasp to guard that precious post,
Nor longer able to endure afoot,
He, falling on his knees, received unharm'd
Upon the shield, now ample for defence,
Their second shower, and still defied the foe.
But they, now sure of conquest, hasten'd on
To thrust him down, and he too felt his strength
Ebbing away. Goervyl, in that hour
Of horror and despair, collected still,
Caught him, and by the shoulders drew him in;
And, calling on her comrades, with their help
Shut to the door in time, and with their weight
Secured it, not their strength; for she alone,
Found worthy of her noble ancestry,
In this emergence felt her faculties
All present, and heroic strength of heart,
To cope with danger and contempt of death.
Shame on ye, British women! shame! exclaim'd
The daughter of King Owen, as she saw
The trembling hands and bloodless countenance
Pale as sepulchral marble; silent some;
Others with womanish cries lamenting now
That ever, in unhappy hour, they left
Their native land; . . a pardonable fear;
For hark, the war-whoop! sound, whereto the howl
Of tigers or hyenas, heard at night
By captive from barbarian foes escaped,
And wandering in the pathless wilderness,
Were music. Shame on ye! Goervyl cried;
Think what your fathers were, your husbands what,
And what your sons should be! These savages
Seek not to wreak on ye immediate death;
So are ye safe, if safety such as this
Be worth a thought; and in the interval
We yet may gain, by keeping to the last
This entrance, easily to be maintain'd
By us, though women, against foes so few, . .
Who knows what succour chance, or timely thought
Of our own friends may send, or Providence,
Who slumbereth not? . . While thus she spake, a hand
In at the window came, of one who sought
That way to win the entrance. She drew out
The arrow through the arm of Malinal,
With gentle care, . . the readiest weapon that, . .
And held it short above the bony barb,
And, adding deeds to words, with all her might
She stabbed it through the hand. The sudden pain
Provoked a cry, and back the savage fell,
Loosening his hold, and maim'd for further war.
Nay! leave that entrance open! she exclaim'd
To one who would have closed it, . . who comes next
Shall not go thence so cheaply! . . for she now
Had taken up a spear to guard that way,
Easily guarded, even by female might.
O heart of proof! what now avails thy worth

And excellent courage ? for the savage foe,
With mattock and with spade, for other use
Design'd, hew now upon the door, and rend
The wattled sides; and they within shrink back,
For now it splinters through, . . and lo, the way
Is open to the spoiler ! Then once more,
Collecting his last strength, did Malinal
Rise on his knees, and over him the maid
Stands with the ready spear, she guarding him
Who guarded her so well. Roused to new force
By that exampled valour, and with will
To achieve one service yet before he died, . .
If death indeed, as sure he thought, were nigh, . .
Malinal gather'd up his fainting powers,
And reaching forward, with a blow that threw
His body on, upon the knee he smote
One Hoaman more, and brought him to the ground.
The foe fell over him ; but he, prepared,
Threw him with sudden jerk aside, and rose
Upon one hand, and with the other plunged
Between his ribs the mortal blade. Meantime
Amalahta, rushing in blind eagerness
To seize Goervyl, set at nought the power
Of female hands, and stooping as he came
Beneath her spear-point, thought with lifted arm
To turn the thrust aside. But she drew back,
And lowered at once the spear with aim so sure,
That on the front it met him, and plough'd up
The whole scalp-length. He, blinded by the blood,
Stagger'd aside, escaping by that chance
A second push, else mortal. And by this,
The women, learning courage from despair,
And by Goervyl's bold example fired,
Took heart, and rushing on with one accord,
Drove out the foe. Then took they hope ; for then
They saw but seven remain in plight for war ;
And, knowing their own number, in the pride
Of strength, caught up stones, staves, or axe, or spear,
To hostile use converting whatsoe'er
The hasty hand could seize. Such fierce attack
Confused the ruffian band ; nor had they room
To aim the arrow, nor to speed the spear,
Each now beset by many. But their Prince,
Still mindful of his purport, call'd to them, . .
Secure my passage while I bear away
The White King's Sister ; having her, the law
Of peace is in our power. . . And on he went
Toward Goervyl, and, with sudden turn,
While on another foe her eye was fix'd,
Ran in upon her, and stoop'd down, and clasp't
The Maid above the knees, and throwing her
Over his shoulder, to the valley straits
Set off : . . ill seconded in ill attempt ;
For now his comrades are too close beset
To aid their Chief, and Mervyn hath beheld
His lady's peril. At the sight, inspired
With force, as if indeed that manly garb
Had clothed a manly heart, the Page ran on,
And with a bill-hook striking at his ham,
Cut the back sinews. Amalahta fell ;
The Maid fell with him : and she first hath risen,
While, grovelling on the earth, he gnash'd his teeth
For agony. Yet, even in those pangs,
Remembering still revenge, he turn'd and seized

Goervyl's skirt, and pluck'd her to the ground,
And roll'd himself upon her, and essay'd
To kneel upon her breast; but she clench'd fast
His bloody locks, and drew him down aside,
Faint now with anguish, and with loss of blood;
And Mervyn, coming to her help again,
As once again he rose, around the neck
Seized him, with throttling grasp, and held him down, . .
Strange strife and horrible, . . till Malinal
Crawl'd to the spot, and thrust into his groin
The mortal sword of Madoc; he himself,
At the same moment, fainting, now no more
By his strong will upheld, the service done.
The few surviving traitors, at the sight
Of their fallen Prince and Leader, now too late
Believed that some diviner power had given
These female arms strength for their overthrow,
Themselves proved weak before them, as, of late,
Their God, by Madoc crush'd.
Away they fled
Toward the valley straits; but in the gorge
Erillyab met their flight: and then her heart,
Boding the evil, smote her, and she bade
Her people seize, and bring them on in bonds,
For judgement. She herself, with quicken'd pace,
Advanced, to know the worst; and o'er the dead
Casting a rapid glance, she knew her son.
She knew him by his garments, by the work
Of her own hands; for now his face, besmear'd
And black with gore, and stiffen'd in its pangs,
Bore of the life no semblance. . . God is good!
She cried, and closed her eyelids, and her lips
Shook, and her countenance changed. But in her heart
She quell'd the natural feeling. . . Bear away
These wretches! . . to her followers she exclaim'd;
And root them from the earth. Then she approach'd
Goervyl, who was pale and trembling now,
Exhausted with past effort; and she took
Gently the Maiden's tremulous hand, and said,
God comfort thee, my Sister! At that voice
Of consolation, from her dreamy state
Goervyl to a sense of all her woe
Awoke, and burst into a gush of tears.
God comfort thee, my Sister! cried the Queen,
Even as He strengthens me. I would not raise
Deceitful hope, . . but in His hand, even yet,
The issue hangs; and He is merciful.

Yea, daughter of Aberfraw, take thou hope!
For Madoc lives! . . he lives to wield the sword
Of righteous vengeance, and accomplish all.

XVII. THE DELIVERANCE

Madoc, meantime, in bonds and solitude,
Lay listening to the tumult. How his heart
Panted! how then, with fruitless strength, he strove
And struggled for enlargement, as the sound
Of battle from without the city came;
While all things near were still, nor foot of man
Nor voice, in that deserted part, were heard.
At length one light and solitary step
Approach'd the place; a woman cross'd the door.

From Madoc's busy mind her image pass'd,
Quick as the form that caused it; but not so
Did the remembrance fly from Coatel,
That Madoc lay in bonds. That thought possess'd
Her soul, and made her, as she garlanded
The fane of Coatlantona with flowers,
Tremble in strong emotion.
It was now
The hour of dusk; the Pabas all were gone,
Gone to the battle; . . none could see her steps;
The gate was nigh. A momentary thought
Shot through her; she delay'd not to reflect,
But hasten'd to the Prince, and took the knife
Of sacrifice, which by the altar hung,
And cut his bonds, and with an eager eye,
Motioning haste and silence, to the gate
She led him. Fast along the forest way,
And fearfully, he follow'd to the chasm.
She beckon'd, and descended, and drew out
From underneath her vest, a cage, or net
It rather might be called, so fine the twigs
Which knit it, where confined two fire-flies gave
Their lustre. By that light did Madoc first
Behold the features of his lovely guide;
And through the entrance of the cavern gloom
He followed in full trust.
Now have they reach'd
The abrupt descent; there Coatel held forth
Her living lamp, and turning, with a smile
Sweet as good Angels wear when they present
Their mortal charge before the throne of Heaven,
She show'd where little Hoel slept below.
Poor child! he lay upon that very spot,
The last whereto his feet had followed her;
And, as he slept, his hand was on the bones
Of one, who years agone had perish'd there,
There, on the place where last his wretched eyes
Could catch the gleam of day. But when the voice,
The well-known voice of Madoc, wakened him, . .
His uncle's voice, . . he started, with a scream
Which echoed through the cavern's winding length,
And stretch'd his arms to reach him. Madoc hush'd
The dangerous transport, raised him up the ascent,
And followed Coatel again, whose face,
Though tears of pleasure still were coursing down,
Betoken'd fear and haste. Adown the wood
They went; and coasting now the lake, her eye
First what they sought beheld, a light canoe,
Moor'd to the bank. Then in her arms she took
The child, and kiss'd him with maternal love,
And placed him in the boat; but when the Prince,
With looks and gestures and imperfect words
Such as the look, the gesture, well explain'd,
Urged her to follow, doubtfully she stood:
A dread of danger, for the thing she had done,
Came on her, and Lincoya rose to mind.
Almost she had resolved; but then the thought
Of her dear father, whom that flight would leave
Alone in age; how he would weep for her,
As one among the dead, and to the grave
Go sorrowing; or, if ever it were known
What she had dared, that on his head the weight
Of punishment would fall. That dreadful fear

Resolved her, and she waved her head, and raised
Her hand, to bid the Prince depart in haste,
With looks whose painful seriousness forbade
All farther effort. Yet unwillingly,
And boding evil, Madoc from the shore
Push'd off his little boat. She on its way
Stood gazing for a moment, lost in thought,
Then struck into the woods.
Swift through the lake
Madoc's strong arm impell'd the light canoe.
Fainter and fainter to his distant ear
The sound of battle came; and now the Moon
Arose in heaven, and poured o'er lake and land
A soft and mellowing ray. Along the shore
Llaian was wandering with distracted steps,
And groaning for her child. She saw the boat
Approach; and as on Madoc's naked limbs,
And on his countenance, the moonbeam fell,
And as she saw the boy in that dim light,
It seem'd as though the Spirits of the dead
Were moving on the waters; and she stood
With open lips that breathed not, and fix'd eyes,
Watching the unreal shapes: but when the boat
Drew nigh, and Madoc landed, and she saw
His step substantial, and the child came near,
Unable then to move, or speak, or breathe,
Down on the sand she sunk.
But who can tell,
Who comprehend, her agony of joy,
When, by the Prince's care restored to sense,
She recognized her child, she heard the name
Of mother from that voice, which, sure, she thought
Had pour'd upon some Priest's remorseless ear
Its last vain prayer for life! No tear relieved
The insupportable feeling that convulsed
Her swelling breast. She look'd, and look'd, and felt
The child, lest some delusion should have mock'd
Her soul to madness; then the gushing joy
Burst forth, and with caresses and with tears
She mingled broken prayers of thanks to heaven.

And now the Prince, when joy had had its course,
Said to her, Knowest thou the mountain path?
For I would to the battle. But at that,
A sudden damp of dread came over her, . .
O leave us not! she cried; lest haply ill
Should have befallen; for I remember now,
How in the woods I spied a savage band
Making towards Caermadoc. God forefend
The evil that I fear! . . What! Madoc cried,
Were ye then left defenceless? . . She replied,
All ran to arms: there was no time for thought,
Nor counsel, in that sudden ill; nor one
Of all thy people, who could, in that hour
Have brook'd home-duty, when thy life or death
Hung on the chance.
Now God be merciful!
Said he; for of Goervyl then he thought,
And the cold sweat started at every pore.
Give me the boy! . . he travels all too slow.
Then in his arms he took him, and sped on,
Suffering more painful terrors, than of late

His own near death provoked. They held their way
In silence up the heights; and, when at length
They reached the entrance of the vale, the Prince
Bade her remain, while he went on to spy
The footsteps of the spoiler. Soon he saw
Men, in the moonlight, stretch'd upon the ground;
And quickening then his pace, in worse alarm,
Along the shade, with cautious step, he moved
Toward one, to seize his weapons: 'twas a corpse;
Nor whether, at the sight, to hope or fear
Yet knew he. But anon, a steady light,
As of a taper, seen in his own home,
Comforted him; and, drawing nearer now,
He saw his sister on her knees, beside
The rushes, ministering to a wounded man.
Safe that the dear one lived, then back he sped
With joyful haste, and summon'd Llaian on,
And in loud talk advanced. Erillyab first
Came forward at the sound; for she had faith
To trust the voice. . . They live! they live! she cried:
God hath redeem'd them! . . Nor the Maiden yet
Believed the actual joy; like one astound,
Or as if struggling with a dream, she stood,
Till he came close, and spread his arms, and call'd
Goervyl! . . and she fell in his embrace.

But Madoc linger'd not, his eager soul
Was in the war, in haste he donn'd his arms;
And as he felt his own good sword again,
Exulting play'd his heart. . . Boy, he exclaim'd
To Mervyn, arm thyself, and follow me!
For in this battle we shall break the power
Of our blood-thirsty foe: and, in thine age,
Wouldst thou not wish, when young men men crowd around,
To hear thee chronicle their fathers' deeds,
Wouldst thou not wish to add, . . And I, too, fought
In that day's conflict?
Mervyn's cheek turn'd pale
A moment, then, with terror all suffused,
Grew fever-red. Nay, nay, Goervyl cried,
He is too young for battles! . . But the Prince,
With erring judgement, in that fear-flush'd cheek
Beheld the glow of enterprizing hope,
And youthful courage. I was such a boy,
Sister! he cried, at Counsyllt; and that day,
In my first field, with stripling arm, smote down
Many a tall Saxon. Saidst thou not but now,
How bravely in the fight of yesterday,
He flesh'd his sword, . . and wouldst thou keep him here
And rob him of his glory? See his cheek!
How it hath crimson'd at the unworthy thought!
Arm! arm! and to the battle!
How her heart
Then panted! how, with late regret, and vain,
Senena wished Goervyl then had heard
The secret, trembling on her lips so oft,
So oft by shame withheld. She thought that now
She could have fallen upon her Lady's neck,
And told her all; but when she saw the Prince,
Imperious shame forbade her, and she felt
It were an easier thing to die than speak.
Avail'd not now regret or female fear!

She mail'd her delicate limbs; beneath the plate
Compress'd her bosom; on her golden locks
The helmet's overheavy load she placed;
Hung from her neck the shield; and, though the sword
Which swung beside her lightest she had chosen,
Though in her hand she held the slenderest spear,
Alike unwieldy for the maiden's grasp,
The sword and ashen lance. But as she touch'd
The murderous point, an icy shudder ran
Through every fibre of her trembling frame;
And, overcome by womanly terror then,
The damsel to Goervyl turn'd, and let
The breastplate fall, and on her bosom placed
The Lady's hand, and hid her face, and cried,
Save me! The warrior, who beheld the act,
And heard not the low voice, with angry eye
Glow'd on the seemly boy of feeble heart.
But, in Goervyl, joy had overpower'd
The wonder; joy to find the boy she loved
Was one, to whom her heart with closer love
Might cling; and to her brother she exclaim'd,
She must not go! We women in the war
Have done our parts.
A moment Madoc dwelt
On the false Mervyn, with an eye from whence
Displeasure did not wholly pass away.
Nor loitering to resolve Love's riddle now
To Malinal he turn'd, where, on his couch,
The wounded youth was laid. . . True friend, said he,
And brother mine, . . for truly by that name
I trust to greet thee, . . if, in this near fight,
My hour should overtake me, . . as who knows
The lot of war? . . Goervyl hath my charge
To quite thee for thy service with herself;
That so thou mayest raise up seed to me
Of mine own blood, who may inherit here
The obedience of thy people and of mine. . .
Malinal took his hand, and to his lips
Feebly he press'd it, saying, One boon more,
Father and friend, I ask! . . if thou shouldst meet
Yuhidthiton in battle, think of me.

XVIII. THE VICTORY

Merciful God! how horrible is night
Upon the plain of Aztlan! there the shout
Of battle, the barbarian yell, the bray
Of dissonant instruments, the clang of arms,
The shriek of agony, the groan of death,
In one wild uproar and continuous din,
Shake the still air; while, overhead, the Moon,
Regardless of the stir of this low world,
Holds on her heavenly way. Still unallay'd
By slaughter raged the battle, unrelax'd
By lengthened toil; anger supplying still
Strength undiminish'd for the desperate strife.
And lo! where yonder, on the temple top,
Blazing aloft, the sacrificial fire
Scene more accurst and hideous than the war
Displays to all the vale; for whosoe'er
That night the Aztecas could bear away,
Hoaman or Briton, thither was he borne;
And as they stretch'd him on the stone of blood,
Did the huge tambour of the God, with voice
Loud as the thunder-peal, and heard as far,

Proclaim the act of death, more visible
Than in broad day-light, by those mid-night fires
Distinctlier seen. Sight that with horror fill'd
The Cymry, and to mightier efforts roused.
Howbeit, this abhorr'd idolatry
Work'd for their safety; the deluded foes,
Obstinate in their faith, forbearing still
The mortal stroke, that they might to the God
Present the living victim, and to him
Let the life flow.
And now the orient sky
Glow'd with the ruddy morning, when the Prince
Came to the field. He lifted up his voice,
And shouted Madoc! Madoc! They who heard
The cry, astonish'd turn'd; and when they saw
The countenance his open helm disclosed,
They echoed, Madoc! Madoc! Through the host
Spread the miraculous joy, . . He lives! he lives!
He comes himself in arms! . . Lincoya heard,
As he had raised his arm to strike a foe,
And stay'd the stroke, and thrust him off, and cried,
Go tell the tidings to thy countrymen,
Madoc is in the war! Tell them his God
Hath set the White King free! Astonishment
Seized on the Azteca; on all who heard,
Amazement and dismay; and Madoc now
Stood in the foremost battle, and his sword, . .
His own good sword, . . flash'd like the sudden death
Of lightning in their eyes.
The King of Aztlan
Heard and beheld, and in his noble heart
Heroic hope arose. Forward he moved,
And in the shock of battle, front to front,
Encountered Madoc. A strong-statured man
Coanocotzin stood, one well who knew
The ways of war, and never yet in fight
Had found an equal foe. Adown his back
Hung the long robe of feather'd royalty;
Gold fenced his arms and legs; upon his helm
A sculptured snake protends the arrowy tongue;
Around a coronal of plumes arose,
Brighter than beam the rainbow hues of light,
Or than the evening glories which the sun
Slants o'er the moving many-colour'd sea,
Such their surpassing beauty; bells of gold
Emboss'd his glittering helmet, and where'er
Their sound was heard, there lay the press of war,
And Death was busiest there. Over the breast
And o'er the golden breastplate of the King,
A feathery cuirass, beautiful to eye,
Light as the robe of peace, yet strong to save;
For the sharp faulchion's baffled edge would glide
From its smooth softness. On his arm he held
A buckler overlaid with beaten gold;
And so he stood, guarding his thighs and legs,
His breast and shoulders also, with the length
Of his broad shield.
Opposed, in mail complete,
Stood Madoc in his strength. The flexile chains
Gave play to his full muscles, and display'd
How broad his shoulders, and his ample breast.
Small was his shield, there broadest where it fenced
The well of life, and gradual to a point
Lessening, steel-strong, and wieldy in his grasp.

It bore those blazoned eaglets, at whose sight,
Along the Marches, or where holy Dee
Through Cestrian pastures rolls his tamer stream,
So oft the yeoman had, in days of yore,
Cursing his perilous tenure, wound the horn,
And warden from the castle-tower rung out
The loud alarum-bell, heard far and wide.
Upon his helm no sculptured dragon sate,
Sate no fantastic terrors ; a white plume
Nodded above, far-seen, floating like foam
Upon the stream of battle, always where
The tide ran strongest. Man to man opposed,
The Sea Lord and the King of Aztlan stood.

Fast on the intervening buckler fell
The Azteca's stone faulchion. Who hath watch'd
The midnight lightnings of the summer storm,
That with their awful blaze irradiate heaven,
Then leave a blacker night ? so quick, so fierce,
Flash'd Madoc's sword, which, like the serpent's tongue,
Seemed double, in its rapid whirl of light.
Unequal arms ! for on the British shield
Avail'd not the stone faulchion's brittle edge,
And in the golden buckler, Madoc's sword
Bit deep. Coanocotzin saw, and dropt
The unprofitable weapon, and received
His ponderous club, . . that club, beneath whose force,
Driven by his father's arm, Tepollomi
Had fallen subdued, . . and fast and fierce he drove
The massy weight on Madoc. From his shield,
The deadening force communicated ran
Up his stunn'd arm ; anon upon his helm,
Crashing, it came ; . . his eyes shot fire, his brain
Swam dizzy, . . he recoils, . . he reels, . . again
The club descends.
That danger to himself
Recall'd the Lord of Ocean. On he sprung,
Within the falling weapon's curve of death,
Shunning its frustrate aim, and breast to breast
He grappled with the King. The pliant mail
Bent to his straining limbs, while plates of gold,
The feathery robe, the buckler's amplitude
Cumbered the Azteca, and from his arm,
Clench'd in the Briton's mighty grasp, at once
He dropt the impeding buckler, and let fall
The unfasten'd club ; which when the Prince beheld,
He thrust him off, and drawing back resumed
The sword that from his wrist suspended hung,
And twice he smote the King ; twice from the quilt
Of plumes the iron glides : and lo ! the King,
So well his soldiers watch their monarch's need,
Shakes in his hand a spear.
But now a cry
Burst on the ear of Madoc, and he saw
Through opening ranks, where Urien was convey'd
A captive to his death. Grief then and shame
And rage inspired him. With a mighty blow
He cleft Coanocotzin's helm ; exposed
The monarch stood ; . . again the thunder-stroke
Came on him, and he fell. . . The multitude,
Forgetful of their country and themselves,
Crowd round their dying King. Madoc, whose eye

Still follow'd Urien, call'd upon his men,
And through the broken army of the foe,
Press'd to his rescue.
But far off the old man
Was borne with furious speed. Ririd alone
Pursued his path, and through the thick of war
Close on the captors, with avenging sword,
Follow'd right on, and through the multitude,
And through the gate of Aztlan, made his way,
And through the streets, till, from the temple-mound,
The press of Pabas and the populace
Repell'd him, while the old man was hurried up.
Hark! that infernal tambour! o'er the lake
Its long-loud thunders roll, and through the hills,
Awakening all their echoes. Ye accurst,
Ye blow the fall too soon! Ye Dogs of Hell,
The Hart is yet at bay!.. Thus long the old man,
As one exhausted or resign'd, had lain,
Resisting not; but at that knell of death,
Springing with unexpected force, he freed
His feet, and shook the Pabas from their hold,
And, with his armed hand, between the eyes
Smote one so sternly, that to earth he fell,
Bleeding, and all astound. A man of proof
Was Urien in his day, thought worthiest,
In martial thewes and manly discipline,
To train the sons of Owen. He had lost
Youth's supple slight; yet still the skill remain'd,
And in his stiffen'd limbs a strength, which yet
Might put the young to shame. And now he set
His back against the altar, resolute
Not as a victim by the knife to die,
But in the act of battle, as became
A man grown grey in arms: and in his heart
There was a living hope; for now he knew
That Madoc lived, nor could the struggle long
Endure against that arm.
Soon was the way
Laid open by the sword; for side by side
The brethren of Aberfraw mow'd their path;
And, following close, the Cymry drive along,
Till on the summit of the mound their cry
Of victory rings aloud. The temple floor,
So often which had reek'd with innocent blood,
Reeks now with righteous slaughter. Frantickly,
In the wild fury of their desperate zeal,
The Priests crowd round the God, and with their knives
Hack at the foe, and call on him to save;..
At the altar, at the Idol's feet they fall.
Nor with less frenzy did the multitude
Flock to defend their God. Fast as they fell,
New victims rush'd upon the British sword;
And sure that day had rooted from the earth
The Aztecas, and on their conquerors drawn
Promiscuous ruin, had not Madoc now
Beheld from whence the fearless ardour sprang;..
They saw Mexitli; momently they hoped
That he would rise in vengeance. Madoc seized
A massy club, and from his azure throne
Shattered the giant idol.
At that sight
The men of Aztlan pause; so was their pause
Dreadful, as when a multitude expect
The Earthquake's second shock. But when they saw

Earth did not open, nor the temple fall
To crush their impious enemies, dismay'd,
They felt themselves forsaken by their Gods;
Then from their temples and their homes they fled,
And, leaving Aztlan to the conqueror,
Sought the near city, whither they had sent
Their women, timely saved.
But Tlalala,
With growing fury as the danger grew,
Raged in the battle; but Yuhidthiton
Still with calm courage, till no hope remain'd,
Fronted the rushing foe. When all was vain,
When back within the gate Cadwallon's force
Resistless had compell'd them, then the Chief
Call'd on the Tiger, . . Let us bear from hence
The dead Ocellopan, the slaughter'd King;
Not to the Strangers should their bones be left,
O Tlalala! . . The Tiger wept with rage,
With generous anger. To the place of death,
Where, side by side, the noble dead were stretch'd,
They fought their way. Eight warriors join'd their shields;
On these, a bier which well beseem'd the dead,
The lifeless Chiefs were laid. Yuhidthiton
Call'd on the people, . . Men of Aztlan! yet
One effort more! Bear hence Ocellopan,
Bear hence the body of your noble King!
Not to the Strangers should their bones be left!
That whoso heard, with wailing and loud cries,
Prest round the body-bearers; few indeed,
For few were they who in that fearful hour
Had ears to hear, . . but with a holy zeal,
Careless of death, around the bier they ranged
Their bulwark breasts. So toward the farther gate
They held their steady way, while outermost
In unabated valour, Tlalala
Faced, with Yuhidthiton, the foe's pursuit.
Vain valour then, and fatal piety,
As the fierce conquerors bore on their retreat,
If Madoc had not seen their perilous strife:
Remembering Malinal, and in his heart
Honouring a gallant foe, he call'd aloud,
And bade his people cease the hot pursuit.
So, through the city gate, they bore away
The dead; and, last of all their countrymen,
Leaving their homes and temples to the foe,
Yuhidthiton and Tlalala retired.

XIX. THE FUNERAL

SOUTHWARD of Aztlan stood beside the Lake,
A city of the Aztecas, by name
Patamba. Thither, from the first alarm,
The women and infirm old men were sent,
And children: thither they who from the fight,
And from the fall of Aztlan, had escaped,
In scatter'd bands repair'd. Their City lost,
Their Monarch slain, their Idols overthrown, . .
These tidings spread dismay; but to dismay
Succeeded horror soon, and kindling rage,
Horror, by each new circumstance increased,
By numbers, rage embolden'd. Lo! to the town,
Lamenting loud, a numerous train approach,
Like mountain torrents, swelling as they go.

Borne in the midst, upon the bier of shields,
The noble dead were seen. To tenfold grief
That spectacle provoked, to tenfold wrath
That anguish stung them. With their yells and groans
Curses are mix'd, and threats, and bitter vows
Of vengeance full and speedy. From the wreck
Of Aztlan who is saved? Tezozomoc,
Chief servant of the Gods, their favoured Priest,
The voice by whom they speak: young Tlalala,
Whom even defeat with fresher glory crowns;
And full of fame, their country's rock of strength,
Yuhidthiton: him to their sovereign slain
Allied in blood, mature in wisdom him,
Of valour unsurpassable, by all
Beloved and honour'd, him the general voice
Acclaims their King; him they demand, to lead
Their gather'd force to battle, to revenge
Their Lord, their Gods, their kinsmen, to redeem
Their altars and their country.
But the dead
First from the nation's gratitude require
The rites of death. On mats of mountain palm,
Wrought of rare texture and of richest hues,
The slaughter'd warriors, side by side, were laid;
Their bodies wrapt in many-colour'd robes
Of gossampine, bedeck'd with gems and gold.
The livid paleness of the countenance,
A mask conceal'd, and hid their ghastly wounds,
The Pabas stood around, and one by one,
Placed in their hands the sacred aloe leaves,
With mystic forms and characters inscribed;
And as each leaf was given, Tezozomoc
Address'd the dead, . . So may ye safely pass
Between the mountains, which in endless war
Hurtle, with horrible uproar and frush
Of rocks that meet in battle. Arm'd with this,
In safety shall ye walk along the road,
Where the Great Serpent from his lurid eyes
Shoots lightning, and across the guarded way
Vibrates his tongue of fire. Receive the third,
And cross the waters where the Crocodile
In vain expects his prey. Your passport this
Through the Eight Deserts; through the Eight Hills this;
And this be your defence against the Wind,
Whose fury sweeps like dust the uprooted rocks,
Whose keenness cuts the soul. Ye noble dead,
Protected with these potent amulets,
Soon shall your Spirits reach triumphantly
The Palace of the Sun!
The funeral train
Moved to Mexitli's temple. First on high
The noble dead were borne; in loud lament
Then follow'd all by blood allied to them,
Or by affection's voluntary ties
Attach'd more closely, brethren, kinsmen, wives.
The Peers of Aztlan, all who from the sword
Of Britain had escaped, honouring the rites,
Came clad in rich array, and bore the arms
And ensigns of the dead. The slaves went last,
And dwarfs, the pastime of the living chiefs,
In life their sport and mockery, and in death
Their victims. Wailing and with funeral hymns,

The long procession moved. Mexitli's Priest,
With all his servants, from the temple-gate
Advanced to meet the train. Two piles were built
Within the sacred court, of odorous wood,
And rich with gums; on these, with all their robes,
Their ensigns and their arms, they laid the dead,
Then lit the pile. The rapid light ran up,
Up flamed the fire, and o'er the darken'd sky
Sweet clouds of incense curl'd.
The Pabas then
Perform'd their bloody office. First they slew
The women whom the slaughter'd most had loved,
Who most had loved the dead. Silent they went
Toward the fatal stone, resisting not,
Nor sorrowing, nor dismay'd, but, as it seem'd,
Stunn'd, senseless. One alone there was, whose cheek
Was flush'd, whose eye was animate with fire,
Her most in life Coanocotzin prized,
By ten years' love endear'd, his counsellor,
His friend, the partner of his secret thoughts;
Such had she been, such merited to be.
She as she bared her bosom to the knife,
Call'd on Yuhidthiton. . . Take heed, O King!
Aloud she cried, and pointed to the Priests,
Beware these wicked men! they to the war
Forced my dead Lord. . . Thou knowest, and I know,
He loved the Strangers; that his noble mind,
Enlighten'd by their lore, had willingly
Put down these cursed altars! . . As she spake,
They dragg'd her to the stone. . . Nay! nay! she cried,
There needs not force! I go to join my Lord!
His blood and mine be on you! . . Ere she ceased,
The knife was in her breast. Tezozomoc,
Trembling with rage, held up toward the Sun
Her reeking heart.
The dwarfs and slaves died last.
That bloody office done, they gathered up
The ashes of the dead, and coffer'd them
Apart; the teeth with them, which unconsumed
Among the ashes lay, a single lock
Shorn from the corpse, and his lip-emerald
Now held to be the Spirit's flawless heart,
In better worlds. The Priest then held on high
The little ark which shrined his last remains,
And call'd upon the people; . . Aztecas,
This was your King, the bountiful, the brave,
Coanocotzin! Men of Aztlan, hold
His memory holy! learn from him to love
Your country and your Gods; for them to live
Like him, like him to die. So from you Heaven,
Where in the Spring of Light his Spirit bathes,
Often shall he descend; hover above
On evening clouds, or plumed with rain bow wings,
Sip honey from the flowers, and warble joy.
Honour his memory! emulate his worth!
So saying, in the temple-tower he laid
The relics of the King.
These duties done,
The living claim their care. His birth, his deeds,
The general love, the general voice, have mark'd
Yuhidthiton for King. Bare-headed, bare
Of foot, of limb, scarfed only round the loins,
The Chieftain to Mexitli's temple moved
And knelt before the God. Tezozomoc

King over Aztlan there anointed him,
And over him, from hallowed cedar-branch,
Sprinkled the holy water. Then the Priest
In a black garment robed him, figured white
With skulls and bones, a garb to emblem war,
Slaughter, and ruin, his imperial tasks.
Next in his hand the Priest a censer placed;
And while he knelt, directing to the God
The steaming incense, thus address'd the King:
Chosen by the people, by the Gods approved,
Swear to protect thy subjects, to maintain
The worship of thy fathers, to observe
Their laws, to make the Sun pursue his course,
The clouds descend in rain, the rivers hold
Their wonted channels, and the fruits of earth
To ripen in their season; Swear, O King!
And prosper, as thou holdest good thine oath.
He raised his voice, and swore. Then on his brow
Tezozomoc the crown of Aztlan placed;
And in the robe of emblem'd royalty,
Preceded by the golden wands of state,
Yuhidthiton went forth, anointed King.

XX. THE DEATH OF COATEL

When now the multitude beheld their King,
In gratulations of reiterate joy
They shout his name, and bid him lead them on
To vengeance. But to answer that appeal
Tezozomoc advanced. . . Oh! go not forth,
Cried the Chief Paba, till the land be purged
From her offence! No God will lead ye on,
While there is guilt in Aztlan. Let the Priests
Who from the ruined city have escaped,
And all who in her temples have perform'd
The ennobling service of her injured Gods,
Gather together now.
He spake; the train
Assembled, priests and matrons, youths and maids.
Servants of Heaven! aloud the Arch-Priest began,
The Gods had favour'd Aztlan; bound for death
The White King lay: our countrymen were strong
In battle, and the conquest had been ours, . .
I speak not from myself, but as the Powers,
Whose voice on earth I am, impel the truth, . .
The conquest had been ours; but treason lurk'd
In Aztlan, treason and foul sacrilege;
And therefore were her children in the hour
Of need abandon'd; therefore were her youth
Cut down, her altars therefore overthrown.
The White King, whom ye saw upon the Stone
Of Sacrifice, and whom ye held in bonds,
Stood in the foremost fight and slew your Lord.
Not by a God, O Aztecas, enlarged
Broke he his bondage! by a mortal hand,
An impious, sacrilegious, traitorous hand,
Your city was betray'd, your King was slain,
Your shrines polluted. The insulted Power,
He who is terrible, beheld the deed,
And now he calls for vengeance.
Stern he spake,
And from Mexitli's altar bade the Priest
Bring forth the sacred water. In his hand
He took the vase, and held it up, and cried,

Accurst be he who did this deed! Accurst
The father who begat him, and the breast
At which he fed! Death be his portion now,
Eternal infamy his lot on earth,
His doom eternal horrors! Let his name
From sire to son, be in the people's mouth,
Through every generation! Let a curse
Of deep and pious and effectual hate
For ever follow the detested name;
And every curse inflict upon his soul
A stab of mortal anguish.
Then he gave
The vase. . . Drink one by one! the innocent
Boldly; on them the water hath no power;
But let the guilty tremble! it shall flow
A draught of agony and death to him,
A stream of fiery poison.
Coatel!
What were thy horrors when the fatal vase
Pass'd to thy trial, . . when Tezozomoc
Fix'd his keen eye on thee! A deathiness
Came over her, . . her blood ran back, . . her joints
Shook like the palsy, and the dreadful cup
Dropt from her conscious hold. The Priest exclaim'd,
The hand of God! the avenger manifest!
Drag her to the altar! . . At that sound of death
The life forsook her limbs, and down she fell,
Senseless. They dragg'd her to the Stone of Blood,
All senseless as she lay; . . in that dread hour
Nature was kind.
Tezozomoc then cried,
Bring forth the kindred of this wretch accurst,
That none pollute the earth! An aged Priest
Came forth and answered, There is none but I,
The father of the dead.
To death with him!
Exclaim'd Tezozomoc; to death with him;
And purify the nation! . . But the King
Permitted not that crime. . . Chief of the Priests,
If he be guilty, let the guilty bleed,
Said he; but never, while I live and reign,
The innocent shall suffer. Hear him speak!

Hear me! the old man replied. That fatal day
I never saw my child. At morn she left
The city, seeking flowers to dress the shrine
Of Coatlantona; and that at eve
I stood among the Pabas in the gate,
Blessing our soldiers, as they issued out,
Let them who saw bear witness. . . Two came forth,
And testified Aculhua spake the words
Of truth.
Full well I know, the old man pursued,
My daughter loved the Strangers, . . that her heart
Was not with Aztlan; but not I the cause!
Ye all remember how the Maid was given, . .
She being, in truth, of all our Maids the flower, . .
In spousals to Lincoya, him who fled
From sacrifice. It was a misery
For me to see my only child condemn'd
In early widowhood to waste her youth,
My only and my beautifullest girl!
Chief of the Priests, you order'd; I obeyed.
Not mine the fault, if when Lincoya fled,
And fought among the enemies, her heart
Was with her husband.
He is innocent!
He shall not die! Yuhidthiton exclaim'd.
Nay, King Yuhidthiton! Aculhua cried,
I merit death. My country overthrown,
My daughter slain, alike demand on me
That justice. When her years of ministry

Vow'd to the temple had expired, my love,
My selfish love, still suffer'd her to give
Her youth to me, by filial piety
In widowhood detain'd. That selfish crime
Heavily, . . heavily, . . do I expiate!
But I am old; and she was all to me.
O King Yuhidthiton, I ask for death;
In mercy, let me die! cruel it were
To bid me waste away alone in age,
By the slow pain of grief. . . Give me the knife
Which pierced my daughter's bosom!
The old man
Moved to the altar; none opposed his way;
With a firm hand he buried in his heart
The reeking flint, and fell upon his child.

XXI. THE SPORTS

A TRANSITORY gloom that sight of death
Impress'd upon the assembled multitude;
But soon the brute and unreflecting crew
Turn'd to their sports. Some bare their olive limbs,
And in the race contend; with hopes and fears
Which rouse to rage, some urge the mimic war.
Here one upon his ample shoulders bears
A comrade's weight, upon whose head a third
Stands poised, like Mercury in act to fly.
Two others balance here on their shoulders
A bifork'd beam, while on its height a third
To nimble cadence shifts his glancing feet,
And shakes a plume aloft, and wheels around
A wreath of bells with modulating sway.
Here round a lofty mast the dancers move
Quick, to quick music; from its top affix'd,
Each holds a coloured cord, and as they weave
The complex crossings of the mazy dance,
The chequer'd network twists around the tree
Its intertexture of harmonious hues.

But now a shout went forth, the Flyers mount,
And from all meaner sports the multitude
Flock to their favourite pastime. In the ground,
Branchless and bark'd, the trunk of some tall pine
Is planted: near its summit a square frame;
Four cords pass through the perforated square,
And fifty times and twice around the tree,
A mystic number, are entwined above.
Four Aztecas, equipp'd with wings, ascend,
And round them bind the ropes; anon they wave
Their pinions, and upborn on spreading plumes
Launch on the air, and wheel in circling flight,
The lengthening cords untwisting as they fly.
A fifth above, upon the perilous point
Dances, and shakes a flag; and on the frame,
Others the while maintain their giddy stand,
Till now, with many a round, the wheeling cords
Draw near their utmost length, and toward the ground
The aërial circles speed; then down the ropes
They spring, and on their way from line to line
Pass, while the shouting multitude endure
A shuddering admiration.
On such sports,
Their feelings center'd in the joy of sight,
The multitude stood gazing, when a man,
Breathless, and with broad eyes, came running on,

His pale lips trembling, and his bloodless cheek
Like one who meets a lion in his path.
The fire! the fire! the temple! he exclaim'd;
Mexitli!.. They, astonish'd at his words,
Hasten toward the wonder, . . and behold!
The inner fane is sheeted white with fire.
Dumb with affright they stood; the enquiring King
Look'd to Tezozomoc; the Priest replied,
I go! the Gods protect me; . . and therewith
He entered boldly in the house of flame.
But instant bounding with inebriate joy
He issues forth. . . The God! the God! he cries,
Joy!.. joy!.. the God!.. the visible hand of Heaven!
Repressing then his transport, . . Ye all know
How that in Aztlan Madoc's impious hand
Destroyed Mexitli's image; . . it is here,
Unbroken, and the same!.. Toward the gate
They press; they see the Giant Idol there,
The serpent girding him, his neck with hearts
Beaded, and in his hand the club, . . even such
As oft in Aztlan, on his azure throne,
They had adored the God, they see him now,
Unbroken and the same!.. Again the Priest
Enter'd; again a second joy inspired
To frenzy all around; . . for forth he came,
Shouting with new delight, . . for in his hand
The banner of the nation he upheld,
That banner to their fathers sent from Heaven,
By them abandon'd to the conqueror.

He motion'd silence, and the crowd were still.
People of Aztlan! he began, when first
Your fathers from their native land went forth,
In search of better seats, this banner came
From Heaven. The Famine and the Pestilence
Had been among them; in their hearts the spring
Of courage was dried up: with midnight fires
Radiate, by midnight thunders heralded,
This banner came from Heaven; and with it came
Health, valour, victory. Aztecas! again
The God restores the blessing. To the God
Move now in solemn dance of grateful joy;
Exalt for him the song.
They form'd the dance,
They rais'd the hymn, and sung Mexitli's praise.
Glory to thee, the Great, the Terrible,
Mexitli, guardian God!.. From whence art thou,
O Son of Mystery? From whence art thou,
Whose sire thy Mother knew not? She at eve
Walk'd in the temple court, and saw from Heaven
A plume descend, as bright and beautiful,
As if some spirit had embodied there
The rainbow hues, or dipt it in the light
Of setting suns. To her it floated down;
She placed it in her bosom, to bedeck
The altar of the God; she sought it there;
Amazed she found it not, amazed she felt
Another life infused... From whence art thou,
O son of Mystery? From whence art thou,
Whose sire thy Mother knew not?
Grief was hers,
Wonder and grief, for life was in her womb,
And her stern children with revengeful eyes
Beheld their Mother's shame. She saw their frowns,
She knew their plots of blood. Where shall she look

For succour, when her sons conspire her death ?
Where hope for comfort, when her daughter whets
The impious knife of murder ? . . From her womb
The voice of comfort came, the timely aid :
Already at her breast the blow was aim'd,
When forth Mexitli leapt, and in his hand
The angry spear, to punish and to save.
Glory to thee, the Great, the Terrible,
Mexitli, guardian God !
Arise and save,
Mexitli, save thy people ! Dreadful one,
Arise, redeem thy city, and revenge !
An impious, an impenetrable foe,
Hath blacken'd thine own altars, with the blood
Of thine own priests ; hath dash'd thine Image down.
In vain did valour's naked breast oppose
Their mighty arms ; in vain the feeble sword
On their impenetrable mail was driven.
Not against thee, Avenger, shall those arms
Avail, nor that impenetrable mail
Resist the fiery arrows of thy wrath.
Arise, go forth in anger, and destroy !

XXII. THE DEATH OF LINCOYA

Aztlan, meantime, presents a hideous scene
Of slaughter. The hot sunbeam, in her streets,
Parch'd the blood pools ; the slain were heap'd in hills ;
The victors, stretch'd in every little shade,
With unhelm'd heads, reclining on their shields,
Slept the deep sleep of weariness. Ere long,
To needful labour rising, from the gates
They drag the dead ; and with united toil,
They dig upon the plain the general grave,
The grave of thousands, deep and wide and long.
Ten such they delved, and o'er the multitudes
Who levell'd with the plain the deep-dug pits,
Ten monumental hills they heap'd on high.
Next horror heightening joy, they overthrew
The skull-built towers, the files of human heads,
And earth to earth consign'd them. To the flames
They cast the idols, and upon the wind
Scatter'd their ashes ; then the temples fell,
Whose black and putrid walls were scaled with blood,
And not one stone of those accursed piles
Was on another left.
Victorious thus
In Aztlan, it behoved the Cymry now
There to collect their strength, and there await,
Or thence with centered numbers urge, the war.
For this was Ririd missioned to the ships,
For this Lincoya from the hills invites
Erillyab and her tribe. There did not breathe,
On this wide world, a happier man that day
Than young Lincoya, when from their retreat
He bade his countrymen come repossess
The land of their forefathers ; proud at heart
To think how great a part himself had borne
In their revenge, and that beloved one,
The gentle saviour of the Prince, whom well
He knew his own dear love, and for the deed
Still dearer loved the dearest. Round the youth,
Women and children, the infirm and old,
Gather to hear his tale ; and as they stood

With eyes of steady wonder, outstretch'd necks,
And open lips of listening eagerness,
Fast play'd the tide of triumph in his veins,
Flush'd his brown cheek, and kindled his dark eye.

And now, reposing from his toil awhile,
Lincoya, on a crag above the straits,
Sate underneath a tree, whose twinkling leaves
Sung to the gale at noon. Ayayaca
Sate by him in the shade: the old man had loved
The youth beside him from his boyhood up,
And still would call him boy. They sate and watch'd
The laden bisons winding down the way,
The multitude who now with joy forsook
Their desolated dwellings; and their talk
Was of the days of sorrow, when they groan'd
Beneath the intolerable yoke, till, sent
By the Great Spirit o'er the pathless deep,
Prince Madoc the Deliverer came to save.
As thus they communed, came a woman up,
Seeking Lincoya; 'twas Aculhua's slave,
The nurse of Coatel. Her wretched eye,
Her pale and livid countenance foretold
Some tale of misery, and his life-blood ebb'd
In ominous fear. But when he heard her words
Of death, he seized the lance, and raised his arm
To strike the blow of comfort.
The old man
Caught his uplifted hand. . . O'er-hasty boy,
Quoth he, regain her yet, if she was dear!
Seek thy beloved in the Land of Souls,
And beg her from the Gods. The Gods will hear,
And in just recompense of love so true
Restore their charge.
The miserable youth
Turn'd at his words a hesitating eye.
I knew a prisoner, . . so the old man pursued,
Or hoping to beguile the youth's despair
With tales that suited the despair of youth,
Or credulous himself of what he told, . .
I knew a prisoner once who welcomed death
With merriment and songs and joy of heart,
Because, he said, the friends whom he loved best
Were gone before him to the Land of Souls;
Nor would they to resume their mortal state,
Even when the Keeper of the Land allow'd,
Forsake its pleasures; therefore he rejoiced
To die and join them there. I question'd him,
How of these hidden things unknowable
So certainly he spake. The man replied,
One of our nation lost the maid he loved,
Nor would he bear his sorrow, . . being one
Into whose heart fear never found a way, . .
But to the Country of the Dead pursued
Her spirit. Many toils he underwent,
And many dangers gallantly surpass'd,
Till to the Country of the Dead he came.
Gently the Guardian of the Land received
The living suppliant; listen'd to his prayer,
And gave him back the Spirit of the Maid.
But from that happy country, from the songs
Of joyance, from the splendour-sparkling dance,
Unwillingly compell'd, the Maiden's Soul
Loathed to return; and he was warn'd to guard
The subtle captive well and warily,
Till in her mortal tenement relodged,
Earthly delights might win her to remain
A sojourner on earth. Such lessoning

The Ruler of the Souls departed gave ;
And mindful of his charge the adventurer brought
His subtle captive home. There underneath
The shelter of a hut, his friends had watch'd
The Maiden's corpse, secured it from the sun,
And fann'd away the insect swarms of heaven.
A busy hand marr'd all the enterprize !
Curious to see the Spirit, he unloosed
The knotted bag which held her, and she fled.
Lincoya, thou art brave ; where man has gone
Thou wouldst not fear to follow : Silently
Lincoya listen'd, and with unmoved eyes ;
At length he answer'd, Is the journey long ?
The old man replied, A way of many moons.
I know a shorter path ! exclaim'd the youth ;
And up he sprung, and from the precipice
Darted : a moment, . . and Ayayaca heard
His body fall upon the rocks below.

XXIII. CARADOC AND SENENA

Maid of the golden locks, far other lot
May gentle Heaven assign thy happier love,
Blue-eyed Senena ! . . She, though not as yet
Had she put off her boy-habiliments,
Had told Goervyl all the history
Of her sad flight, and easy pardon gain'd
From that sweet heart, for guile which meant no ill,
And secrecy, in shame too long maintain'd.
With her dear Lady now, at this still hour
Of evening is the seeming page gone forth,
Beside Caermadoc mere. They loiter'd on,
Along the windings of its grassy shore,
In such free interchange of inward thought
As the calm hour invited ; or at times,
Willingly silent, listening to the bird
Whose one repeated melancholy note,
By oft repeating melancholy made,
Solicited the ear ; or gladlier now
Hearkening that cheerful one, who knoweth all
The songs of all the winged choristers,
And in one sequence of melodious sounds
Pours all their music. But a wilder strain
At fits came o'er the water ; rising now,
Now with a dying fall, in sink and swell
More exquisitely sweet than ever art
Of man evoked from instrument of touch,
Or beat, or breath. It was the evening gale,
Which passing o'er the harp of Caradoc,
Swept all its chords at once, and blended all
Their music into one continuous flow.
The solitary Bard beside his harp
Leant underneath a tree, whose spreading boughs,
With broken shade that shifted to the breeze,
Play'd on the waving waters. Overhead
There was the leafy murmur, at his foot
The lake's perpetual ripple ; and from far,
Borne on the modulating gale, was heard
The roaring of the mountain cataract. . .
A blind man would have loved the lovely spot.

Here was Senena by her Lady led,
Trembling, but not reluctant. They drew nigh,
Their steps unheard upon the elastic moss,
Till playfully Goervyl, with quick touch,

Ran o'er the harp-strings. At the sudden sound
He rose. . . Hath then thy hand, quoth she, O Bard,
Forgot its cunning, that the wind should be
Thine harper ? . . Come ! one strain for Britain's sake ;
And let the theme be Woman ! . . He replied,
But if the strain offend, O Lady fair,
Blame thou the theme, not me ! . . Then to the harp
He sung, . . Three things a wise man will not trust,
The Wind, the Sunshine of an April day,
And Woman's plighted faith. I have beheld
The Weathercock upon the steeple-point
Steady from morn till eve ; and I have seen
The bees go forth upon an April morn,
Secure the sunshine will not end in showers ;
But when was Woman true ?
False Bard ! thereat,
With smile of playful anger, she exclaim'd,
False Bard ! and slanderous song ! Were such thy thoughts
Of woman, when thy youthful lays were heard
In Heilyn's hall ? . . But at that name his heart
Leapt, and his cheek with sudden flush was fired ;
In Heilyn's hall, quoth he, I learn'd the song.
There was a Maid, who dwelt among the hills
Of Arvon, and to one of humbler birth
Had pledged her troth ; . . nor rashly, nor beguiled, . .
They had been playmates in their infancy,
And she in all his thoughts had borne a part,
And all his joys. The Moon and all the Stars
Witness'd their mutual vows ; and for her sake
The song was framed ; for in the face of day
She broke them. . . But her name ? Goervyl ask'd ;
Quoth he, The poet loved her still too well,
To couple it with shame.
O fate unjust
Of womankind ! she cried ; our virtues bloom,
Like violets, in shade and solitude,
While evil eyes hunt all our failings out,
For evil tongues to bruit abroad in jest,
And song of obloquy ! . . I knew a Maid,
And she too dwelt in Arvon, and she too
Loved one of lowly birth, who ill repaid
Her spotless faith ; for he to ill reports,
And tales of falsehood cunningly devised,
Lent a light ear, and to his rival left
The loathing Maid. The wedding-day arrived,
The harpers and the gleemen, far and near,
Came to the wedding-feast ; the wedding-guests
Were come, the altar drest, the bride-maids met ;
The father, and the bridegroom, and the priest
Wait for the bride. But she the while did off
Her bridal robes, and clipt her golden locks,
And put on boy's attire, through wood and wild
To seek her own true love ; and over sea,
Forsaking all for him, she followed him, . .
Nor hoping nor deserving fate so fair ;
And at his side she stood, and heard him wrong
Her faith with slanderous tales ; and his dull eye,
As it had learnt his heart's forgetfulness,
Knows not the trembling one, who even now
Yearns to forgive him all !
He turn'd, he knew
The blue-eyed Maid, who fell upon his breast.

XXIV. THE EMBASSY

Hark! from the towers of Aztlan how the shouts
Of clamorous joy re-ring! the rocks and hills
Take up the joyful sound, and o'er the lake
Roll their slow echoes. . . Thou art beautiful!
Queen of the Valley! thou art beautiful,
Thy walls, like silver, sparkle to the sun;
Melodious wave thy groves, thy garden-sweets
Enrich the pleasant air, upon the lake
Lie the long shadows of thy towers, and high
In heaven thy temple-pyramids arise,
Upon whose summit now, far visible
Against the clear blue sky, the Cross of Christ
Proclaims unto the nations round the news
Of thy redemption. Thou art beautiful,
Aztlan! O City of the Cymbric Prince!
Long mayest thou flourish in thy beauty, long
Prosper beneath the righteous conqueror,
Who conquers to redeem! Long years of peace
And happiness await thy Lord and thee,
Queen of the Valley!
Hither joyfully
The Hoamen came to repossess the land
Of their forefathers. Joyfully the youth
Came shouting, with acclaim of grateful praise,
Their great Deliverer's name; the old, in talk
Of other days, which mingled with their joy
Memory of many a hard calamity,
And thoughts of time and change, and human life
How changeful and how brief. Prince Madoc met
Erillyab at the gate. . . Sister and Queen,
Said he, here let us hold united reign,
O'er our united people; by one faith,
One interest bound, and closer to be link'd
By laws and language and domestic ties,
Till both become one race, for ever more
Indissolubly knit.
O friend, she cried,
The last of all my family am I;
Yet sure, though last, the happiest, and by Heaven
Favour'd abundantly above them all.
Dear Friend, and brother dear! enough for me
Beneath the shadow of thy shield to dwell,
And see my people, by thy fostering care,
Made worthy of their fortune. Graciously
Hath the Beloved One appointed all,
Educing good from ill, himself being good.
Then to the royal palace of the Kings
Of Aztlan, Madoc led Erillyab,
There where her sires had held their ruder reign,
To pass the happy remnant of her years,
Honour'd and loved by all.
Now had the Prince
Provided for defence, disposing all
As though a ready enemy approach'd.
But from Patamba yet no army moved;
Four Heralds only, by the King dispatch'd,
Drew nigh the town. The Hoamen as they came,
Knew the green mantle of their privilege,
The symbols which they bore, an arrow-point
Depress'd, a shield, a net, which, from the arm
Suspended, held their food. They through the gate
Pass with permitted entrance, and demand
To see the Ocean Prince. The Conqueror
Received them, and the elder thus began:
Thus to the White King, King Yuhidthiton
His bidding sends; such greeting as from foe
Foe may receive, where individual hate
Is none, but honour and assured esteem,

And what were friendship did the Gods permit,
The King of Aztlan sends. Oh dream not thou
That Aztlan is subdued; nor in the pride
Of conquest tempt thy fortune! Unprepared
For battle, at an hour of festival,
Her children were surprised; and thou canst tell
How perilously they maintain'd the long
And doubtful strife. From yonder temple-mount
Look round the plain, and count her towns, and mark
Her countless villages, whose habitants
All are in arms against thee! Thinkest thou
To root them from the land? Or wouldst thou live,
Harass'd by night and day with endless war,
War at thy gates; and to thy children leave
That curse for their inheritance? . . The land
Is all before thee: Go in peace, and choose
Thy dwelling-place, North, South, or East, or West;
Or mount again thy houses of the sea
And search the waters. Whatsoe'er thy wants
Demand, will Aztlan willingly supply,
Prepared with friendly succour, to assist
Thy soon departure. Thus Yuhidthiton,
Remembering his old friendship, counsels thee;
Thus, as the King of Aztlan, for himself
And people, he commands. If obstinate,
If blind to your own welfare, ye persist,
Woe to ye, wretches! to the armed man,
Who in the fight must perish; to the wife,
Who vainly on her husband's aid will call;
Woe to the babe that hangs upon the breast,
For Aztlan comes in anger, and her Gods
Spare none.

The Conqueror calmly answer'd him, . .
By force we won your city, Azteca;
By force we will maintain it: . . to the King
Repeat my saying. . . To this goodly land
Your fathers came for an abiding place,
Strangers like us, but not like us, in peace.
They conquer'd and destroyed. A tyrant race,
Bloody and faithless, to the hills they drove
The unoffending children of the vale,
And, day by day, in cruel sacrifice
Consumed them. God hath sent the Avengers here!
Powerful to save we come, and to destroy,
When Mercy on Destruction calls for aid.
Go tell your nation that we know their force,
That they know ours! that their Patamba soon
Shall fall like Aztlan; and what other towns
They seek in flight, shall like Patamba fall:
Till broken in their strength and spirit-crush'd
They bow the knee, or leave the land to us,
Its worthier Lords.
If this be thy reply,
Son of the Ocean! said the messenger,
I bid thee, in the King of Aztlan's name
Mortal defiance. In the field of blood.
Before our multitudes shall trample down
Thy mad and miserable countrymen,
Yuhidthiton invites thee to the strife
Of equal danger. So may he avenge
Coanocotzin, or like him in death
Discharge his duty.
Tell Yuhidthiton,
Madoc replied, that in the field of blood
I never shunn'd a foe. But say thou to him,
I will not seek him there, against his life

To raise the hand which hath been joined with his
In peace. . . With that the Heralds went their way;
Nor to the right nor to the left they turn,
But to Patamba straight they journey back.

XXV. THE LAKE FIGHT

The mariners, meantime, at Ririd's will,
Unreeve the rigging, and the masts they strike;
And now ashore they haul the lighten'd hulks,
Tear up the deck, the severed planks bear off,
Disjoin the well-scarfed timbers, and the keel
Loosen asunder: then to the lake-side
Bear the materials, where the Ocean Lord
Himself directs their work. Twelve vessels there,
Fitted alike to catch the wind, or sweep
With oars the moveless surface, they prepare;
Lay down the keel, the stern-post rear, and fix
The strong-curved timbers. Others from the wood
Bring the tall pines, and from their hissing trunks
Force, by the aid of fire, the needful gum;
Beneath the close-caulk'd planks its odorous stream
They pour; then, last, the round-projecting prows
With iron arm, and launch, in uproar loud
Of joy, anticipating victory,
The galleys long and sharp. The masts are rear'd,
The sails are bent, and lo! the ready barks
Lie on the lake.
It chanced, the Hoamen found
A spy of Aztlan, and before the Prince
They led him. But when Madoc bade him tell,
As his life-ransom, what his nation's force,
And what their plans; the savage answer'd him,
With dark and sullen eye and smile of wrath,
If aught the knowledge of my country's force
Could profit thee, be sure, ere I would let
My tongue play traitor, thou shouldst limb from limb
Hew me, and make each separate member feel
A separate agony of death. O Prince!
But I will tell ye of my nation's force,
That ye may know and tremble at your doom;
That fear may half subdue ye to the sword
Of vengeance. . . Can ye count the stars of Heaven?
The waves which ruffle o'er the lake? the leaves
Swept from the autumnal forest? Can ye look
Upon the eternal snows of yonder height
And number each particular flake that form'd
The mountain-mass? . . so numberless they come,
Whoe'er can wield the sword, or hurl the lance,
Or aim the arrow; from the growing boy,
Ambitious of the battle, to the old man,
Who to revenge his country and his Gods
Hastens, and then to die. By land they come;
And years must pass away ere on their path
The grass again will grow: they come by lake;
And ye shall see the shoals of their canoes
Darken the waters. Strangers! when our Gods
Have conquer'd, when ye lie upon the Stone
Of Sacrifice extended one by one,
Half of our armies cannot taste your flesh,
Though given in equal shares, and every share
Minced like a nestling's food!

Madoc replied,
Azteca, we are few; but through the woods
The Lion walks alone. The lesser fowls
Flock multitudinous in heaven, and fly
Before the eagle's coming. We are few;
And yet thy nation hath experienced us
Enough for conquest. Tell thy countrymen,
We can maintain the city which we won.

So saying he turn'd away, rejoiced at heart
To know himself alike by lake or land
Prepared to meet their power.
The fateful day
Draws on; by night the Aztecas embark.
At day-break from Patamba they set forth,
From every creek and inlet of the lake,
All moving towards Aztlan; safely thus
Weening to reach the plain before her walls,
And fresh for battle. Shine thou forth,
O Sun!
Shine fairly forth upon a scene so fair!
Their thousand boats, and the ten thousand oars
From whose broad bowls the waters fall and flash,
And twice ten thousand feather'd helms, and shields,
Glittering with gold and scarlet plumery.
Onward they come with song and swelling horn;
While, louder than all voice and instrument,
The dash of their ten thousand oars, from shore
To shore and hill to hill, re-echoing rolls,
In undistinguishable peals of sound
And endless echo. On the other side
Advance the British barks; the freshening breeze
Fills the broad sail, around the rushing keel
The waters sing, while proudly they sail on
Lords of the water. Shine thou forth,
O Sun!
Shine forth upon their hour of victory!
Onward the Cymry speed. The Aztecas,
Though wondering at that unexpected sight,
Bravely made on to meet them, seized their bows,
And shower'd, like rain, upon the pavaised barks,
The rattling shafts. Strong blows the auspicious gale;
Madoc, the Lord of Ocean, leads the way;
He holds the helm; the galley where he guides
Flies on, and full upon the first canoe
Drives shattering; midway its long length it struck,
And o'er the wreck with unimpeded force
Dashes among the fleet. The astonish'd men
Gaze in inactive terror. They behold
Their splinter'd vessels floating all around,
Their warriors struggling in the lake, with arms
Experienced in the battle vainly now.
Dismay'd they drop their bows, and cast away
Their unavailing spears, and take to flight,
Before the Masters of the Elements,
Who rode the waters, and who made the winds
Wing them to vengeance! Forward now they bend,
And backward then, with strenuous strain of arm,
Press the broad paddle. . . Hope of victory
Was none, nor of defence, nor of revenge,
To sweeten death. Toward the shore they speed,
Toward the shore they lift their longing eyes: . .
O fools, to meet on their own element
The Sons of Ocean! . . Could they but aland
Set foot, the strife were equal, or to die
Less dreadful. But, as if with wings of wind,
On fly the British barks! . . the favouring breeze

Blows strong; . . far, far behind their roaring keels
Lies the long line of foam; the helm directs
Their force; they move as with the limbs of life,
Obedient to the will that governs them.
Where'er they pass, the crashing shock is heard,
The dash of broken waters, and the cry
Of sinking multitudes. Here one plies fast
The practised limbs of youth, but o'er his head
The galley drives; one follows a canoe
With skill availing only to prolong
Suffering; another, as with wiser aim
He swims across, to meet his coming friends,
Stunn'd by the hasty and unheeding oar,
Sinks senseless to the depths. Lo! yonder boat
Graspt by the thronging strugglers; its light length
Yields to the overbearing weight, and all
Share the same ruin. Here another shows
Crueller contest, where the crew hack off
The hands that hang for life upon its side,
Lest all together perish; then in vain
The voice of friend or kinsman prays for mercy,
Imperious self controuls all other thoughts;
And still they deal around unnatural wounds,
When the strong bark of Britain over all
Sails in the path of death. . . God of the Lake,
Tlaloc! and thou, O Aiauh, green-robed Queen!
How many a wretch, in dying agonies,
Invoked ye in the misery of that day!
Long after, on the tainted lake, the dead
Welter'd; there, perch'd upon his floating prey,
The vulture fed in daylight; and the wolves,
Assembled at their banquet round its banks,
Disturb'd the midnight with their howl of joy.

XXVI. THE CLOSE OF THE CENTURY

THERE was mourning in Patamba; the north wind
Blew o'er the lake, and drifted to the shore
The floating wreck and bodies of the dead.
Then on the shore the mother might be seen,
Seeking her child; the father to the tomb,
With limbs too weak for that unhappy weight,
Bearing the bloated body of his son;
The wife, who, in expectant agony,
Watch'd the black carcass on the coming wave.

On every brow terror was legible,
Anguish in every eye. There was not one
Who in the general ruin did not share
Peculiar grief, and in his country's loss
Lament some dear one dead. Along the lake
The frequent funeral-piles, for many a day,
With the noon-light their melancholy flames
Dimly commingled; while the mourners stood,
Watching the pile, to feed the lingering fire,
As slowly it consumed the watery corpse.

Thou didst not fear, young Tlalala! thy soul,
Unconquer'd and unconquerable, rose
Superior to its fortune. When the Chiefs
Hung their dejected heads, as men subdued
In spirit, then didst thou, Yuhidthiton,
Calm in the hour of evil, still maintain
Thy even courage. They from man to man
Go, with the mourners mourning, and by grief
Exciting rage, till, at the promised fight,

The hope of vengeance, a ferocious joy
Flash'd in the eyes which glisten'd still with tears
Of tender memory. To the brave they spake
Of Aztlan's strength, . . for Aztlan still was strong : . .
The late defeat, . . not there by manly might,
By honourable valour, by the force
Of arms subdued, shame aggravated loss ;
The White Men from the waters came, perchance
Sons of the Ocean, by their parent Gods
Aided, and conquerors not by human skill.
When man met man, when in the field of fight
The soldier on firm earth should plant his foot,
Then would the trial be, the struggle then,
The glory, the revenge.
Tezozomoc,
Alike unbroken by defeat, endured
The evil day ; but in his sullen mind
Work'd thoughts of other vengeance. He the King
Summon'd apart from all, with Tlalala,
And thus advised them : We have vainly tried
The war ; these mighty Strangers will not yield
To mortal strength ; yet shall they be cut off
So ye will heed my counsel, and to force
Add wisdom's aid. Put on a friendly front ;
Send to their Prince the messenger of peace ;
He will believe our words : he will forgive
The past ; . . the offender may. So days and months,
Yea, years, if needful, will we wear a face
Of friendliness, till some fit hour arrive,
When we may fire their dwellings in the night,
Or mingle poison in their cups of mirth.
The warrior, from whose force the Lion flies,
Falls by the Serpent's tooth.

Thou speakest well,
Tlalala answer'd ; but my spirit ill
Can brook revenge delay'd.
The Priest then turn'd
His small and glittering eye toward the King ;
But on the Monarch's mild and manly brow
A meaning sate, which made that crafty eye
Bend, quickly abash'd. While yet I was a child,
Replied the King of Aztlan, on my heart
My father laid two precepts. Boy, be brave !
So, in the midnight battle, shalt thou meet,
Fearless, the sudden foe. Boy, let thy lips
Be clean from falsehood ! in the mid-day sun,
So never shalt thou need from mortal man
To turn thy guilty face. Tezozomoc,
Holy I keep the lessons of my sire.

But if the enemy, with their dreadful arms,
Again, said Tlalala, . . If again the Gods
Will our defeat, Yuhidthiton replied,
Vain is it for the feeble power of man
To strive against their will. I augur not
Of ill, young Tiger ! but if ill betide,
The land is all before us. Let me hear
Of perfidy and serpent-wiles no more !
In the noon-day war, and in the face of Heaven,
I meet my foes. Let Aztlan follow me ;
And if one man of all her multitudes
Shall better play the warrior in that hour,
Be his the sceptre ! But if the people fear
The perilous strife, and own themselves subdued,
Let us depart ! The universal Sun
Confines not to one land his partial beams ;
Nor is man rooted, like a tree, whose seed
The winds on some ungenial soil have cast,
There where he cannot prosper.

The dark Priest
Conceal'd revengeful anger, and replied,
Let the King's will be done! An aweful day
Draws on; the Circle of the Years is full;
We tremble for the event. The times are strange;
There are portentous changes in the world;
Perchance its end is come.
Be it thy care,
Priest of the Gods, to see the needful rites
Duly perform'd, Yuhidthiton replied.
On the third day, if yonder Lord of Light
Begin the Circle of the Years anew,
Again we march to war.
One day is past;
Another day comes on. At earliest dawn
Then was there heard through all Patamba's streets
The warning voice . . Woe! woe! the Sun hath reach'd
The limits of his course; he hath fulfill'd
The appointed cycle! . . Fast, and weep, and pray, . .
Four Suns have perish'd, . . fast, and weep, and pray,
Lest the fifth perish also. On the first
The floods arose; the waters of the heavens,
Bursting their everlasting boundaries,
Whelm'd in one deluge earth and sea and sky,
And quench'd its orb of fire. The second Sun
Then had its birth, and ran its round of years;
Till having reach'd its date, it fell from heaven,
And crush'd the race of men. Another life
The Gods assign'd to Nature; the third Sun
Form'd the celestial circle; then its flames
Burst forth, and overspread earth, sea, and sky,
Deluging the wide universe with fire,
Till all things were consumed, and its own flames
Fed on itself, and spent themselves, and all
Was vacancy and darkness. Yet again
The World had being, and another Sun
Roll'd round the path of Heaven. That perish'd too:
The mighty Whirlwinds rose, and far away
Scatter'd its dying flames. The fifth was born;
The fifth to-day completes its destined course,
Perchance to rise no more. O Aztlan, fast
And pray! the Cycle of the Years is full!

Thus through Patamba did the ominous voice
Exhort the people. Fervent vows all day
Were made, with loud lament; in every fane,
In every dwelling-place of man, were prayers,
The supplications of the affrighted heart,
Earnestly offered up with tears and groans.
So pass'd the forenoon; and when now the Sun
Sloped from his southern height the downward way
Of Heaven, again the ominous warner cried,
Woe! woe! the Cycle of the Years is full!
Quench every fire! Extinguish every light!
And every fire was quench'd, and every light
Extinguish'd at the voice.
Meantime the Priests
Began the rites. They gash'd themselves, and plunged
Into the sacred pond of Ezapan,
Till the clear water, on whose bed of sand
The sunbeams sparkled late, opaque with blood,
On its black surface mirror'd all things round.
The children of the temple, in long search,

Had gather'd for the service of this day
All venomous things that fly, or wind their path
With sinuous trail, or crawl on reptile feet.
These in one cauldron, o'er the sacred fire
They scorch, till of the loathsome living tribes,
Who, writhing in their burning agonies,
Fix on each other ill-directed wounds,
Ashes alone are left. In infants' blood
They mix the infernal unction, and the Priests
Anoint themselves therewith.
Lo! from the South
The Orb of Glory his regardless way
Holds on. Again Patamba's streets receive
The ominous voice, . . Woe! woe! the Sun pursues
His journey to the limits of his course!
Let every man in darkness veil his wife;
Veil every maiden's face; let every child
Be hid in darkness, there to weep and pray,
That they may see again the birth of light!
They heard, and every husband veil'd his wife
In darkness; every maiden's face was veil'd;
The children were in darkness led to pray,
That they might see the birth of light once more.

Westward the Sun proceeds; the tall tree casts
A longer shade; the night-eyed insect tribes
Wake to their portion of the circling hours;
The water-fowl, retiring to the shore,
Sweep in long files the surface of the lake.
Then from Patamba to the sacred mount
The Priests go forth; but not with songs of joy,
Nor cheerful instruments they go, nor train
Of festive followers; silent and alone,
Leading one victim to his dreadful death,
They to the mountain-summit wend their way.

On the south shore, and level with the lake,
Patamba stood; westward were seen the walls
Of Aztlan rising on a gentle slope;
Southward the plain extended far and wide;
To the east the mountain-boundary began,
And there the sacred mountain rear'd its head;
Above the neighbouring heights, its lofty peak
Was visible far off. In the vale below,
Along the level borders of the lake,
The assembled Aztecas, with wistful eye,
Gaze on the sacred summit, hoping there
Soon to behold the fire of sacrifice
Arise, sure omen of continued light.
The Pabas to the sacred peak begin
Their way, and as they go, with ancient songs
Hymn the departed Sun.
O Light of Life
Yet once again arise! yet once again
Commence thy course of glory! Time hath seen
Four generations of mankind destroy'd,
When the four Suns expired; oh, let not thou,
Human thyself of yore, the human race
Languish and die in darkness!
The fourth Sun
Had perish'd; for the mighty Whirlwinds rose,
And swept it, with the dust of the shatter'd world,
Into the great abyss. The eternal Gods
Built a new World, and to a Hero race
Assign'd it for their goodly dwelling-place;
And shedding on the bones of the destroy'd

A quickening dew, from them, as from a seed,
Made a new race of human-kind spring up,
The menials of the Heroes born of Heaven.
But in the firmament no orb of day
Perform'd its course; Nature was blind; the fount
Of light had ceased to flow; the eye of Heaven
Was quench'd in darkness. In the sad obscure,
The earth-possessors to their parent Gods
Pray'd for another Sun, their bidding heard,
And in obedience raised a flaming pile.
Hopeful they circled it, when from above
The voice of the Invisible proclaim'd,
That he who bravely plunged amid the fire
Should live again in heaven, and there shine forth
The Sun of the young World. The Hero race
Grew pale, and from the fiery trial shrunk.
Thou, Nahuaztin, thou, O mortal born,
Heardest! thy heart was strong, the flames received
Their victim, and the humbled Heroes saw
The orient sky, with smiles of rosy joy,
Welcome the coming of the new-born God.
O human once, now let not human-kind
Languish, and die in darkness!
In the East
Then didst thou pause to see the Hero race
Perish. In vain, with impious arms, they strove
Against thy will; in vain against thine orb
They shot their shafts; the arrows of their pride
Fell on themselves; they perish'd, to thy praise.
So perish still thine impious enemies,
O Lord of Day! But to the race devout,
Who offer up their morning sacrifice,
Honouring thy godhead, and with morning hymns,
And with the joy of music and of dance,
Welcome thy glad uprise, . . to them, O Sun,
Still let the fountain-streams of splendour flow,
Still smile on them propitious, thou whose smile
Is light and life and joyance! Once again,
Parent of Being, Prince of Glory, rise,
Begin thy course of beauty once again!

Such was their ancient song, as up the height
Slowly they wound their way. The multitude
Beneath repeat the strain; with fearful eyes
They watch the spreading glories of the west!
And when at length the hastening orb hath sunk
Below the plain, such sinking at the heart
They feel, as he who hopeless of return
From his dear home departs. Still on the light,
The last green light that lingers in the west,
Their looks are fasten'd, till the clouds of night
Roll on, and close in darkness the whole heaven.
Then ceased their songs; then o'er the crowded vale
No voice of man was heard. Silent and still
They stood, all turn'd toward the east, in hope
There on the holy mountain to behold
The sacred fire, and know that once again
The Sun begins his stated round of years.

The Moon arose; she shone upon the lake,
Which lay one smooth expanse of silver light!
She shone upon the hills and rocks, and cast

Upon their hollows and their hidden glens
A blacker depth of shade. Who then look'd round,
Beholding all that mighty multitude,
Felt yet severer awe, . . so solemnly still
The thronging thousands stood. The breeze was heard
That rustled in the reeds; the little wave,
That rippled to the shore and left no foam,
Sent its low murmurs far.
Meantime the Priests
Have stretch'd their victim on the mountain-top;
A miserable man, his breast is bare,
Bare for the death that waits him; but no hand
May there inflict the blow of mercy. Piled
On his bare breast, the cedar boughs are laid;
On his bare breast, dry sedge and odorous gums
Laid ready to receive the sacred spark,
And blaze, to herald the ascending Sun,
Upon his living altar. Round the wretch
The inhuman ministers of rites accurst
Stand, and expect the signal when to strike
The seed of fire. Their Chief, Tezozomoc,
Apart from all, upon the pinnacle
Of that high mountain, eastward turns his eyes;
For now the hour draws nigh, and speedily
He looks to see the first faint dawn of day
Break through the orient sky.
Impatiently
The multitude await the happy sign.
Long hath the midnight pass'd, and every hour,
Yea, every moment, to their torturing fears
Seem'd lengthen'd out, insufferably long
Silent they stood, and breathless in suspense.
The breeze had fallen: no stirring breath of wind
Rustled the reeds. Oppressive, motionless,
It was a labour and a pain to breathe
The close, hot, heavy air. . . Hark! from the woods
The howl of their wild tenants! and the birds, . .
The day-birds, in blind darkness fluttering,
Fearful to rest, uttering portentous cries!
Anon, the sound of distant thunders came:
They peal beneath their feet. Earth shakes and yawns, . .
And lo! upon the sacred mountain's top,
The light . . the mighty flame! A cataract
Of fire bursts upward from the mountain head, . .
High, . . high, . . it shoots! the liquid fire boils out;
It streams in torrents down! Tezozomoc
Beholds the judgement: wretched, . . wretched man,
On the upmost pinnacle he stands, and sees
The lava floods beneath him: and his hour
Is come. The fiery shower, descending, heaps
Red ashes round; they fall like drifted snows,
And bury and consume the accursed Priest.

The Tempest is abroad. Fierce from the North
A wind uptears the lake, whose lowest depths
Rock, while convulsions shake the solid earth.
Where is Patamba? where the multitudes
Who throng'd her level shores? The mighty Lake
Hath burst its bounds, and yon wide valley roars,
A troubled sea, before the rolling storm.

XXVII. THE MIGRATION OF THE AZTECAS

THE storm hath ceased; but still the lava-tides
Roll down the mountain-side in streams of fire;
Down to the lake they roll, and yet roll on,
All burning, through the waters. Heaven above
Glows round the burning mount, and fiery clouds
Scour through the black and starless firmament.
Far off, the Eagle, in her mountain-nest,
Lies watching in alarm, with steady eye,
The midnight radiance.
But the storm hath ceased;
The earth is still; . . and lo! while yet the dawn
Is struggling through the eastern cloud, the barks
Of Madoc on the lake!
What man is he
On yonder crag, all dripping from the flood
Who hath escaped its force? He lies along,
Now near exhaust with self-preserving toil,
And still his eye dwells on the spreading waves,
Where late the multitudes of Aztlan stood,
Collected in their strength. It is the King
Of Aztlan, who, extended on the rock,
Looks vainly for his people. He beholds
The barks of Madoc plying to preserve
The strugglers; . . but how few! upon the crags
Which verge the northern shore, upon the heights
Eastward, how few have refuged! Then the King
Almost repented him of life preserved,
And wished the waves had whelmed him, or the sword
Fallen on him, ere this ill, this wretchedness,
This desolation. Spirit-troubled thus,
He call'd to mind how, from the first, his heart
Inclined to peace, and how reluctantly,
Obedient to the Pabas and their Gods,
Had he to this unhappy war been driven.
All now was ended: it remain'd to yield,
To obey the inevitable will of Heaven,
From Aztlan to depart. As thus he mused,
A Bird, upon a bough which overhung
The rock, as though in echo to his thought,
Cried out, . . Depart! depart! for so the note,
Articulately in his native tongue,
Spake to the Azteca. The King look'd up;
The hour, the horrors round him, had impress'd
Feelings and fears well fitted to receive
All superstition; and the voice which cried,
Depart! depart! seem'd like the voice of fate,
He thought, perhaps Coanocotzin's soul,
Descending from his blissful halls in the hour
Of evil thus to comfort and advise,
Hover'd above him.
Lo! toward the rock,
Oaring with feeble arms his difficult way,
A warrior struggles; he hath reach'd the rock,
Hath grasped it, but his strength, exhausted, fails
To lift him from the depth. The King descends
Timely in aid; he holds the feeble one
By his long locks, and on the safety-place
Lands him. He, panting, from his clotted hair
Shook the thick waters, from his forehead wiped
The blinding drops; on his preserver's face
Then look'd, and knew the King. Then Tlalala
Fell on his neck, and groan'd. They laid them down
In silence, for their hearts were full of woe.

The sun came forth, it shone upon the rock;
They felt the kindly beams; their strengthen'd blood
Flow'd with a freer action. They arose,
And look'd around, if aught of hope might meet
Their prospect. On the lake the galleys plied
Their toil successfully, ever to the shore
Bearing their rescued charge: the eastern heights,
Rightward and leftward of the fiery mount,
Were throng'd with fugitives, whose growing crowds
Speckled the ascent. Then Tlalala took hope,
And his young heart, reviving, re-assumed
Its wonted vigour. Let us to the heights,
He cried; . . all is not lost, Yuhidthiton!
When they behold thy countenance, the sight
Will cheer them in their woe, and they will bless
The Gods of Aztlan.
To the heights they went;
And when the remnant of the people saw
Yuhidthiton preserved, such comfort then
They felt, as utter wretchedness can feel,
That only gives grief utterance, only speaks
In groans and recollections of the past.
He look'd around; a multitude was there, . .
But where the strength of Aztlan? where her hosts?
Her marshall'd myriads where, whom yester Sun
Had seen in arms array'd, in spirit high,
Mighty in youth and courage? . . What were these,
This remnant of the people? Women most,
Who from Patamba when the shock began
Ran with their infants; widow'd now, yet each
Among the few who from the lake escaped,
Wandering with eager eyes and wretched hope.
The King beheld and groan'd; against a tree
He leant, and bow'd his head, subdued of soul.

Meantime, amid the crowd, doth Tlalala
Seek for his wife and boy. In vain he seeks
Ilanquel there; in vain for her he asks;
A troubled look, a melancholy eye,
A silent motion of the hopeless head,
These answer him. But Tlalala represt
His anguish, and he call'd upon the King; . .
Yuhidthiton! thou seest thy people left;
Their fate must be determined; they are here
Houseless and wanting food.
The King look'd up, . .
It is determined, Tlalala! the Gods
Have crush'd us. Who can stand against their wrath?

Have we not life and strength? the Tiger cried.
Disperse these women to the towns which stand
Beyond the ruinous waters; against them
The White Men will not war. Ourselves are few,
Too few to root the invaders from our land,
Or meet them with the hope of equal fight;
Yet may we shelter in the woods, and share
The Lion's liberty; and man by man
Destroy them, till they shall not dare to walk
Beyond their city walls, to sow their fields,
Or bring the harvest in. We may steal forth
In the dark midnight, go and burn and kill,

Till all their dreams shall be of fire and death,
Their sleep be fear and misery.
Then the King
Stretch'd forth his hand, and pointed to the lake
Where Madoc's galleys still to those who clung
To the tree-tops for life, or faintly still
Were floating on the waters, gave their aid. . .
O think not, Tlalala, that ever more
Will I against those noble enemies
Raise my right hand in war, lest righteous Heaven
Should blast the impious hand and thankless heart!
The Gods are leagued with them; the Elements
Banded against us! For our overthrow
Were yonder mountain-springs of fire ordain'd;
For our destruction the earth-thunders loosed,
And the everlasting boundaries of the lake
Gave way, that these destroying floods might roll
Over the brave of Aztlan! . . We must leave
The country which our fathers won in arms:
We must depart.
The word yet vibrated
Fresh on their hearing, when the Bird above,
Flapping his heavy wings, repeats the sound,
Depart! depart! . . Ye hear! the King exclaim'd;
It is an omen sent to me from Heaven;
I heard it late in solitude, the voice
Of fate. . . It is Coanocotzin's soul,
Who counsels our departure. . . And the Bird
Still flew around, and in his wheeling flight
Pronounced the articulate note. The people heard
In faith, and Tlalala made no reply;
But dark his brow, and gloomy was his frown.

Then spake the King, and called a messenger,
And bade him speed to Aztlan. . . Seek the Lord
Of Ocean; tell him that Yuhidthiton
Yields to the will of Heaven, and leaves the land
His fathers won in war. Only one boon,
In memory of our former friendship, ask,
The Ashes of my Fathers, . . if indeed
The conqueror have not cast them to the winds.

The herald went his way circuitous,
Along the mountains, . . for the flooded vale
Barr'd the near passage: but before his his feet
Could traverse half their track, the fugitives
Beheld canoes from Aztlan, to the foot
Of that protecting eminence, whereon
They had their stand, draw nigh. The doubtful sight
Disturb'd them, lest perchance with hostile strength
They came upon their weakness. Wrongful fear, . .
For now Cadwallon, from his bark unarm'd,
Set foot ashore, and for Yuhidthiton
Enquired, if yet he lived? The King receives
His former friend. . . From Madoc come I here,
The Briton said: Raiment and food he sends,
And peace; so shall this visitation prove
A blessing, if it knit the bonds of peace,
And make us as one people.
Tlalala!
Hearest thou him? Yuhidthiton exclaim'd.
Do thou thy pleasure, King! the Tiger cried:
My path is plain. . . Thereat Yuhidthiton,
Answering, replied, Thus humbled as thou seest,
Beneath the visitation of the Gods,
We bow before their will! To them we yield;

To you, their favourites, we resign the land
Our fathers conquer'd. Never more may Fate
In your days or your children's to the end
Of time afflict it thus!
He said, and call'd
The Heralds of his pleasure. . . Go ye forth
Throughout the land: North, South, and East, and West,
Proclaim the ruin. Say to all who bear
The name of Azteca, Heaven hath destroy'd
Our nation: Say, the voice of Heaven was heard, . .
Heard ye it not? . . bidding us leave the land,
Who shakes us from her bosom. Ye will find,
Women, old men, and babes; the many, weak
Of body and of spirit ill prepared,
With painful toil, through long and dangerous ways
To seek another country. Say to them,
The White Men will not lift the arm of power
Against the feeble; here they may remain
In peace, and to the grave in peace go down.
But they who would not have their children lose
The name their fathers bore, will join our march.
Ere ye set forth, behold the destined way.

He bade a pile be raised upon the top
Of that high eminence, to all the winds
Exposed. They raised the pile, and left it free
To all the winds of Heaven; Yuhidthiton
Alone approach'd it, and applied the torch.
The day was calm, and o'er the flaming pile
The wavy smoke hung lingering, like a mist
That in the morning tracks the valley-stream.
Swell over swell it rose, erect above,
On all sides spreading like a stately palm.
So moveless were the winds. Upward it roll'd,
Still upward, when a stream of upper air
Cross'd it, and bent its top, and drove it on,
Straight over Aztlan. An acclaiming shout
Welcomed the will of Heaven; for lo, the smoke
Fast travelling on, while not a breath of air
Is felt below. Ye see the appointed course;
Exclaim'd the King. Proclaim it where ye go!
On the third morning we begin our march.

Soon o'er the lake a winged galley sped,
Wafting the Ocean Prince. He bore, preserved
When Aztlan's bloody temples were cast down,
The Ashes of the Dead. The King received
The relics, and his heart was full; his eye
Dwelt on his father's urn. At length he said,
One more request, O Madoc! . . If the lake
Should ever to its ancient bounds return,
Shrined in the highest of Patamba's towers
Coanocotzin rests. . . But wherefore this?
Thou wilt respect the Ashes of the King.

Then Madoc said, Abide not here, O King,
Thus open to the changeful elements;
But till the day of your departure come,
Sojourn with me. . . Madoc, that must not be!
Yuhidthiton replied. Shall I behold
A stranger dwelling in my father's house?
Shall I become a guest, where I was wont

To give the guest his welcome ? . . He pursued,
After short pause of speech, . . For our old men,
And helpless babes and women ; for all those
Whom wisely fear and feebleness deter
To tempt strange paths, through swamp and wilderness
And hostile tribes, for these Yuhidthiton
Intreats thy favour. Underneath thy sway,
They may remember me without regret,
Yet not without affection. . . They shall be
My people, Madoc answer'd. . . And the rites
Of holiness transmitted from their sires, . .
Pursued the King, . . will these be suffer'd them ? . .
Blood must not flow, the Christian Prince replied ;
No Priest must dwell among us ; that hath been
The cause of all this misery ! . . Enough,
Yuhidthiton replied ; I ask no more.
It is not for the conquer'd to impose
Their law upon the conqueror.
Then he turn'd,
And lifted up his voice, and call'd upon
The people : . . All whom fear or feebleness
Withhold from following my adventurous path,
Prince Madoc will receive. No blood must flow,
No Paba dwell among them. Take upon ye,
Ye who are weak of body or of heart,
The Strangers' easy yoke : beneath their sway
Ye may remember me without regret.
Soon take your choice, and speedily depart,
Lest ye impede the adventurers. . . As he spake,
Tears flow'd, and groans were heard. The line was drawn,
Which whoso would accept the Strangers' yoke
Should pass. A multitude o'erpast the line ;
But all the youth of Aztlan crowded round
Yuhidthiton, their own beloved King.

So two days long, with unremitting toil,
The barks of Britain to the adventurers
Bore due supply ; and to new habitants
The city of the Cymry spread her gates ;
And in the vale around, and on the heights,
Their numerous tents were pitch'd. Meantime the tale
Of ruin went abroad, and how the Gods
Had driven her sons from Aztlan. To the King,
Companions of his venturous enterprize,
The bold repair'd ; the timid and the weak,
All whom, averse from perilous wanderings,
A gentler nature had disposed to peace,
Beneath the Strangers' easy rule remain'd.
Now the third morning came. At break of day
The mountain echoes to the busy sound
Of multitudes. Before the moving tribe
The Pabas bear, enclosed from public sight,
Mexitli ; and the Ashes of the Kings
Follow the Chair of God. Yuhidthiton
Then leads the marshall'd ranks, and by his side,
Silent and thoughtfully, went Tlalala.

At the north gate of Aztlan, Malinal,
Borne in a litter, waited their approach ;
And now alighting, as the train drew nigh,
Propt by a friendly arm, with feeble step
Advanced to meet the King. Yuhidthiton,
With eye severe and darkening countenance,
Met his advance. I did not think, quoth he,
Thou wouldst have ventured this ! and liefer far
Should I have borne away with me the thought

That Malinal had shunn'd his brother's sight,
Because their common blood yet raised in him
A sense of his own shame! . . Comest thou to show
Those wounds, the marks of thine unnatural war
Against thy country? Or to boast the meed
Of thy dishonour, that thou tarriest here,
Sharing the bounty of the Conqueror,
While, with the remnant of his countrymen,
Saving the Gods of Aztlan and the name,
Thy brother and thy King goes forth to seek
His fortune!
Calm and low the youth replied,
Ill dost thou judge of me, Yuhidthiton!
And rashly doth my brother wrong the heart
He better should have known! Howbeit, I come
Prepared for grief. These honourable wounds
Were gain'd when, singly, at Caermadoc, I
Opposed the ruffian Hoamen: and even now,
Thus feeble as thou seest me, come I thence,
For this farewell. Brother, . . Yuhidthiton, . .
By the true love which thou didst bear my youth,
Which ever, with a love as true, my heart
Hath answer'd, . . by the memory of that hour
When at our mother's funeral pile we stood,
Go not away in wrath, but call to mind
What thou hast ever known me! Side by side
We fought against the Strangers, side by side
We fell; together in the council-hall
We counsell'd peace, together in the field
Of the assembly pledged the word of peace.
When plots of secret slaughter were devised,
I raised my voice alone, alone I kept
My plighted faith, alone I prophesied
The judgement of just Heaven; for this I bore
Reproach and shame and wrongful banishment,
In the action self-approved, and justified
By this unhappy issue.
As he spake,
Did natural feeling strive within the King,
And thoughts of other days, and brotherly love,
And inward consciousness that had he too
Stood forth, obedient to his better mind,
Nor weakly yielded to the wily priests,
Wilfully blind, perchance even now in peace
The kingdom of his fathers had preserved
Her name and empire. . . Malinal, he cried,
Thy brother's heart is sore: in better times
I may with kindlier thoughts remember thee
And honour thy true virtue. Now, farewell!

So saying, to his heart he held the youth,
Then turn'd away. But then cried Tlalala,
Farewell, Yuhidthiton! the Tiger cried;
For I too will not leave my native land, . .
Thou who wert King of Aztlan! Go thy way;
And be it prosperous. Through the gate thou seest
Yon tree that overhangs my father's house;
My father lies beneath it. Call to mind
Sometimes that tree; for at its foot in peace

Shall Tlalala be laid, who will not live
Survivor of his country.
Thus he said,
And through the gate, regardless of the King,
Turn'd to his native door. Yuhidthiton
Follow'd, and Madoc; but in vain their words
Essay'd to move the Tiger's steady heart;
When from the door a tottering boy came forth
And clung around his knees with joyful cries,
And called him father. At the joyful sound
Out ran Ilanquel; and the astonish'd man
Beheld his wife and boy, whom sure he deem'd
Whelm'd in the flood; but them the British barks,
Returning homeward from their merciful quest,
Found floating on the waters. . . For a while,
Abandon'd by all desperate thoughts, he stood:
Soon he collected, and to Madoc turn'd,
And said, O Prince, this woman and her boy
I leave to thee. As thou hast ever found
In me a fearless unrelenting foe,
Fighting with ceaseless zeal his country's cause,
Respect them! . . Nay, Ilanquel! hast thou yet
To learn with what unshakeable resolve
My soul maintains its purposes? I leave thee
To a brave foe's protection. . . Lay me, Madoc,
Here, in my father's grave.
With that he took
His mantle off, and veil'd Ilanquel's face; . .
Woman, thou may'st not look upon the Sun,
Who sets to rise no more! . . That done, he placed
His javelin hilt against the ground; the point
He fitted to his heart; and, holding firm
The shaft, fell forward, still with steady hand
Guiding the death-blow on.
So in the land
Madoc was left sole Lord; and far away
Yuhidthiton led forth the Aztecas,
To spread in other lands Mexitli's name,
And rear a mightier empire, and set up
Again their foul idolatry; till Heaven,
Making blind Zeal and bloody Avarice
Its ministers of vengeance, sent among them
The heroic Spaniard's unrelenting sword.

BALLADS AND METRICAL TALES.

MARY, THE MAID OF THE INN

[First published in *The Oracle*, afterwards in *Poems*, 1797.]

The circumstances related in the following Ballad were told me when a schoolboy, as having happened in the north of England. Either Furnes or Kirkstall Abbey (I forget which) was named as the scene. The original story, however, is in Dr. Plot's *History of Staffordshire*, p. 291.

The metre is Mr. Lewis's invention; and metre is one of the few things concerning which popularity may be admitted as a proof of merit. The ballad has become popular owing to the metre and the story; and it has been made the subject of a fine picture by Mr. Barker.

1

WHO is yonder poor Maniac, whose wildly-fix'd eyes
Seem a heart overcharged to express?
She weeps not, yet often and deeply she sighs;
She never complains, but her silence implies
The composure of settled distress.

2

No pity she looks for, no alms doth she seek;
Nor for raiment nor food doth she care:
Through her tatters the winds of the winter blow bleak
On that wither'd breast, and her weather-worn cheek
Hath the hue of a mortal despair.

3

Yet cheerful and happy, nor distant the day,
Poor Mary the Maniac hath been;
The Traveller remembers who journey'd this way
No damsel so lovely, no damsel so gay,
As Mary, the Maid of the Inn.

4

Her cheerful address fill'd the guests with delight
As she welcomed them in with a smile;
Her heart was a stranger to childish affright,
And Mary would walk by the Abbey at night
When the wind whistled down the dark aisle.

5

She loved, and young Richard had settled the day,
And she hoped to be happy for life:
But Richard was idle and worthless, and they
Who knew him would pity poor Mary, and say
That she was too good for his wife.

6

'Twas in autumn, and stormy and dark was the night,
And fast were the windows and door;
Two guests sat enjoying the fire that burnt bright,
And smoking in silence with tranquil delight
They listen'd to hear the wind roar.

7

'"'Tis pleasant,' cried one, 'seated by the fire-side,
To hear the wind whistle without.'
'What a night for the Abbey!' his comrade replied,
'Methinks a man's courage would now be well tried
Who should wander the ruins about.

8

'I myself, like a school-boy, should tremble to hear
The hoarse ivy shake over my head;
And could fancy I saw, half persuaded by fear,
Some ugly old Abbot's grim spirit appear,
For this wind might awaken the dead!'

9

'I'll wager a dinner,' the other one cried,
'That Mary would venture there now.'
'Then wager and lose!' with a sneer he replied,
'I'll warrant she'd fancy a ghost by her side,
And faint if she saw a white cow.'

10

'Will Mary this charge on her courage allow?'
His companion exclaim'd with a smile;
'I shall win, . . for I know she will venture there now,
And earn a new bonnet by bringing a bough
From the elder that grows in the aisle.'

11

With fearless good-humour did Mary comply,
And her way to the Abbey she bent;
The night was dark, and the wind was high,
And as hollowly howling it swept through the sky,
She shiver'd with cold as she went.

12

O'er the path so well known still proceeded the Maid
Where the Abbey rose dim on the sight;
Through the gateway she enter'd, she felt not afraid,
Yet the ruins were lonely and wild, and their shade
Seem'd to deepen the gloom of the night.

13

All around her was silent, save when the rude blast
Howl'd dismally round the old pile;
Over weed-cover'd fragments she fearlessly pass'd,
And arrived at the innermost ruin at last
Where the elder-tree grew in the aisle.

14

Well pleased did she reach it, and quickly drew near,
And hastily gather'd the bough;
When the sound of a voice seem'd to rise on her ear,
She paused, and she listen'd intently, in fear,
And her heart panted painfully now.

15

The wind blew, the hoarse ivy shook over her head,
She listen'd . . nought else could she hear;
The wind fell; her heart sunk in her bosom with dread,
For she heard in the ruins distinctly the tread
Of footsteps approaching her near.

16

Behind a wide column half breathless with fear
She crept to conceal herself there:
That instant the moon o'er a dark cloud shone clear,
And she saw in the moonlight two ruffians appear,
And between them a corpse did they bear.

17

Then Mary could feel her heart-blood curdle cold;
Again the rough wind hurried by, . .
It blew off the hat of the one, and behold
Even close to the feet of poor Mary it roll'd, . .
She felt, and expected to die.

18

'Curse the hat!' he exclaims: 'Nay, come on till we hide
The dead body,' his comrade replies.
She beholds them in safety pass on by her side, [supplied,
She seizes the hat, fear her courage
And fast through the Abbey she flies.

19

She ran with wild speed, she rush'd in at the door,
She gazed in her terror around,
Then her limbs could support their faint burthen no more,
And exhausted and breathless she sank on the floor,
Unable to utter a sound.

20

Ere yet her pale lips could the story impart,
For a moment the hat met her view;..
Her eyes from that object convulsively start,
For . . what a cold horror then thrilled through her heart
When the name of her Richard she knew!

21

Where the old Abbey stands, on the common hard by,
His gibbet is now to be seen;
His irons you still from the road may espy;
The traveller beholds them, and thinks with a sigh
Of poor Mary, the Maid of the Inn.

Bristol, 1796.

DONICA

[Published in *Poems*, 1797. The Ballad is founded on stories 'to be found in the notes to *The Hierarchies of the Blessed Angels*, a poem by Thomas Heywood, .. 1635.']

High on a rock whose castle shade
Darken'd the lake below,
In ancient strength majestic stood
The towers of Arlinkow.

The fisher in the lake below
Durst never cast his net,
Nor ever swallow in its waves
Her passing wing would wet.

The cattle from its ominous banks
In wild alarm would run,
Though parch'd with thirst, and faint beneath
The summer's scorching sun.

For sometimes when no passing breeze
The long lank sedges waved,
All white with foam and heaving high
Its deafening billows raved.

And when the tempest from its base
The rooted pine would shake,
The powerless storm unruffling swept
Across the calm dead lake.

And ever then when death drew near
The house of Arlinkow,
Its dark unfathom'd waters sent
Strange music from below.

The Lord of Arlinkow was old,
One only child had he,
Donica was the Maiden's name,
As fair as fair might be.

A bloom as bright as opening morn
Suffused her clear white cheek;
The music of her voice was mild,
Her full dark eyes were meek.

Far was her beauty known, for none
So fair could Finland boast;
Her parents loved the Maiden much,
Young Eberhard loved her most.

Together did they hope to tread
The pleasant path of life,
For now the day drew near to make
Donica Eberhard's wife.

The eve was fair and mild the air,
Along the lake they stray;
The eastern hill reflected bright
The tints of fading day.

And brightly o'er the water stream'd
The liquid radiance wide;
Donica's little dog ran on
And gambol'd at her side.

Youth, health, and love bloom'd on her cheek,
Her full dark eyes express
In many a glance to Eberhard
Her soul's meek tenderness.

Nor sound was heard, nor passing gale
Sigh'd through the long lank sedge;
The air was hush'd, no little wave
Dimpled the water's edge:

When suddenly the lake sent forth
Its music from beneath,
And slowly o'er the waters sail'd
The solemn sounds of death.

As those deep sounds of death arose,
Donica's cheek grew pale,
And in the arms of Eberhard
The lifeless Maiden fell.

Loudly the Youth in terror shriek'd,
And loud he call'd for aid,
And with a wild and eager look
Gazed on the lifeless Maid.

But soon again did better thoughts
In Eberhard arise,
And he with trembling hope beheld
The Maiden raise her eyes.

And on his arm reclined she moved
With feeble pace and slow,
And soon with strength recover'd reach'd
The towers of Arlinkow.

Yet never to Donica's cheeks
Return'd their lively hue;
Her cheeks were deathy white and wan,
Her lips a livid blue;

Her eyes so bright and black of yore
Were now more black and bright,
And beam'd strange lustre in her face
So deadly wan and white.

The dog that gambol'd by her side,
And loved with her to stray,
Now at his alter'd mistress howl'd,
And fled in fear away.

Yet did the faithful Eberhard
Not love the Maid the less;
He gazed with sorrow, but he gazed
With deeper tenderness.

And when he found her health unharm'd
He would not brook delay,
But press'd the not unwilling Maid
To fix the bridal day.

And when at length it came, with joy
He hail'd the bridal day,
And onward to the house of God
They went their willing way.

But when they at the altar stood,
And heard the sacred rite,
The hallow'd tapers dimly stream'd
A pale sulphureous light.

And when the Youth with holy warmth
Her hand in his did hold,
Sudden he felt Donica's hand
Grow deadly damp and cold.

But loudly then he shriek'd, for lo!
A Spirit met his view,
And Eberhard in the angel form
His own Donica knew.

That instant from her earthly frame
A Daemon howling fled,
And at the side of Eberhard
The livid corpse fell dead.

Bristol, 1796.

RUDIGER

[Published in *Poems*, 1797. The story has been adapted from Thomas Heywood.]

BRIGHT on the mountain's heathy slope
The day's last splendours shine,
And rich with many a radiant hue
Gleam gaily on the Rhine.

And many a one from Waldhurst's walls
Along the river stroll'd,
As ruffling o'er the pleasant stream
The evening gales came cold.

So as they stray'd a swan they saw
Sail stately up and strong,
And by a silver chain he drew
A little boat along.

Whose streamer to the gentle breeze
Long floating flutter'd light;
Beneath whose crimson canopy
There lay reclined a knight.

With arching crest and swelling breast
On sail'd the stately swan,
And lightly up the parting tide
The little boat came on.

And onward to the shore they drew,
Where having left the knight,
The little boat adown the stream
Fell soon beyond the sight.

Was never a knight in Waldhurst's walls
Could with this stranger vie,
Was never a youth at aught esteem'd
When Rudiger was by.

Was never a maid in Waldhurst's walls
Might match with Margaret;
Her cheek was fair, her eyes were dark,
Her silken locks like jet.

And many a rich and noble youth
Had sought to win the fair,
But never a rich and noble youth
Could rival Rudiger.

At every tilt and tourney he
Still bore away the prize;
For knightly feats superior still,
And knightly courtesies.

His gallant feats, his looks, his love,
Soon won the willing fair;
And soon did Margaret become
The wife of Rudiger.

Like morning dreams of happiness
Fast roll'd the months away;
For he was kind and she was kind,
And who so blest as they?

Yet Rudiger would sometimes sit
Absorb'd in silent thought,
And his dark downward eye would seem
With anxious meaning fraught:

But soon he raised his looks again,
And smiled his cares away,
And mid the hall of gaiety
Was none like him so gay.

And onward roll'd the waning months,
The hour appointed came,
And Margaret her Rudiger
Hail'd with a father's name.

But silently did Rudiger
The little infant see;
And darkly on the babe he gazed,—
A gloomy man was he.

And when to bless the little babe
The holy Father came,
To cleanse the stains of sin away
In Christ's redeeming name,

Then did the cheek of Rudiger
Assume a death-pale hue,
And on his clammy forehead stood
The cold convulsive dew;

And faltering in his speech he bade
The Priest the rites delay,
Till he could, to right health restored,
Enjoy the festive day.

When o'er the many-tinted sky
He saw the day decline,
He called upon his Margaret
To walk beside the Rhine;

'And we will take the little babe,
For soft the breeze that blows,
And the mild murmurs of the stream
Will lull him to repose.'

And so together forth they went,
The evening breeze was mild,
And Rudiger upon his arm
Pillow'd the little child.

Many gay companies that eve
Along the river roam,
But when the mist began to rise,
They all betook them home.

Yet Rudiger continued still
Along the banks to roam,
Nor aught could Margaret prevail
To turn his footsteps home.

'Oh turn thee, turn thee, Rudiger!
The rising mists behold,
The evening wind is damp and chill,
The little babe is cold!'

'Now hush thee, hush thee, Margaret,
The mists will do no harm,
And from the wind the little babe
Is shelter'd on my arm.'

'Oh turn thee, turn thee, Rudiger!
Why onward wilt thou roam?
The moon is up, the night is cold,
And we are far from home.'

He answer'd not; for now he saw
A Swan come sailing strong,
And by a silver chain he drew
A little boat along.

To shore they came, and to the boat
Fast leapt he with the child,
And in leapt Margaret . . breathless now,
And pale with fear, and wild.

With arching crest and swelling breast
On sail'd the stately Swan,
And lightly down the rapid tide
The little boat went on.

The full orb'd moon, that beam'd around
Pale splendour through the night,
Cast through the crimson canopy
A dim discolour'd light.

And swiftly down the hurrying stream
In silence still they sail,
And the long streamer fluttering fast
Flapp'd to the heavy gale.

And he was mute in sullen thought,
And she was mute with fear,
Nor sound but of the parting tide
Broke on the listening ear.

The little babe began to cry;
Then Margaret raised her head,
And with a quick and hollow voice,
'Give me the child!' she said.

'Now hush thee, hush thee, Margaret,
Nor my poor heart distress!
I do but pay perforce the price
Of former happiness.

'And hush thee too, my little babe!
Thy cries so feeble cease;
Lie still, lie still; . . a little while
And thou shalt be at peace.'

So as he spake to land they drew,
And swift he stept on shore,
And him behind did Margaret
Close follow evermore.

It was a place all desolate,
Nor house nor tree was there;
But there a rocky mountain rose,
Barren, and bleak, and bare.

And at its base a cavern yawn'd,
No eye its depth might view,
For in the moon-beam shining round
That darkness darker grew.

Cold horror crept through Margaret's blood,
Her heart it paused with fear,
When Rudiger approach'd the cave,
And cried, 'Lo, I am here!'

A deep sepulchral sound the cave
Return'd, 'Lo, I am here!'
And black from out the cavern gloom
Two giant arms appear.

And Rudiger approach'd, and held
The little infant nigh; [then
Then Margaret shriek'd, and gather'd
New powers from agony.

And round the baby fast and close
Her trembling arms she folds,
And with a strong convulsive grasp
The little infant holds.

'Now help me, Jesus!' loud she cries,
And loud on God she calls;
Then from the grasp of Rudiger
The little infant falls.

The mother holds her precious babe;
But the black arms clasp'd him round,
And dragg'd the wretched Rudiger
Adown the dark profound.

Bristol, 1796.

JASPAR

[First published in *The Morning Post*, May 3, 1798; afterwards in *Poems*, vol. ii, 1799.]

Jaspar was poor, and vice and want
Had made his heart like stone;
And Jaspar look'd with envious eyes
On riches not his own.

On plunder bent abroad he went
Toward the close of day,
And loiter'd on the lonely road
Impatient for his prey.

No traveller came . . he loiter'd long,
And often look'd around,
And paused and listen'd eagerly
To catch some coming sound.

He sate him down beside the stream
That crost the lonely way,
So fair a scene might well have charm'd
All evil thoughts away:

He sate beneath a willow tree
Which cast a trembling shade;
The gentle river full in front
A little island made;

Where pleasantly the moon-beam shone
Upon the poplar trees,
Whose shadow on the stream below
Play'd slowly to the breeze.

He listen'd . . and he heard the wind
That waved the willow tree;
He heard the waters flow along,
And murmur quietly.

He listen'd for the traveller's tread,
The nightingale sung sweet; . .
He started up, for now he heard
The sound of coming feet;

He started up and graspt a stake,
And waited for his prey;
There came a lonely traveller,
And Jaspar crost his way.

But Jaspar's threats and curses fail'd
The traveller to appal,
He would not lightly yield the purse
Which held his little all.

Awhile he struggled, but he strove
With Jaspar's strength in vain;
Beneath his blows he fell and groan'd,
And never spake again.

Jaspar raised up the murder'd man,
And plunged him in the flood,
And in the running water then
He cleansed his hands from blood.

The waters closed around the corpse,
And cleansed his hands from gore,
The willow waved, the stream flow'd on,
And murmur'd as before.

There was no human eye had seen
The blood the murderer spilt,
And Jaspar's conscience never felt
The avenging goad of guilt.

And soon the ruffian had consumed
The gold he gain'd so ill,
And years of secret guilt pass'd on,
And he was needy still.

One eve beside the alehouse fire
He sate as it befell,
When in there came a labouring man
Whom Jaspar knew full well.

He sate him down by Jaspar's side,
A melancholy man,
For spite of honest toil, the world
Went hard with Jonathan.

His toil a little earn'd, and he
With little was content;
But sickness on his wife had fallen,
And all was well-nigh spent.

Long with his wife and little ones
He shared the scanty meal,
And saw their looks of wretchedness,
And felt what wretches feel.

Their Landlord, a hard man, that day,
Had seized the little left,
And now the sufferer found himself
Of every thing bereft.

He leant his head upon his hand,
His elbow on his knee,
And so by Jaspar's side he sate,
And not a word said he.

'Nay, . . why so downcast?' Jaspar cried,
'Come . . cheer up, Jonathan!
Drink, neighbour, drink! 'twill warm thy heart . .
Come! come! take courage, man!'

He took the cup that Jaspar gave,
And down he drain'd it quick;
'I have a wife,' said Jonathan,
'And she is deadly sick.

'She has no bed to lie upon,
I saw them take her bed . .
And I have children . . would to God
That they and I were dead!

'Our Landlord he goes home to-night,
And he will sleep in peace . .
I would that I were in my grave,
For there all troubles cease.

'In vain I pray'd him to forbear,
Though wealth enough has he!
God be to him as merciless
As he has been to me!'

When Jaspar saw the poor man's soul
On all his ills intent,
He plied him with the heartening cup,
And with him forth he went.

'This Landlord on his homeward road
'Twere easy now to meet.
The road is lonesome, Jonathan!
And vengeance, man! is sweet.'

He listen'd to the tempter's voice,
The thought it made him start; . .
His head was hot, and wretchedness
Had harden'd now his heart.

Along the lonely road they went
And waited for their prey,
They sate them down beside the stream
That crost the lonely way.

They sate them down beside the stream
And never a word they said,
They sate and listen'd silently
To hear the traveller's tread.

The night was calm, the night was dark,
No star was in the sky,
The wind it waved the willow boughs,
The stream flow'd quietly.

The night was calm, the air was still,
Sweet sung the nightingale;
The soul of Jonathan was soothed,
His heart began to fail.

''Tis weary waiting here,' he cried,
'And now the hour is late, . .
Methinks he will not come to-night,
No longer let us wait.'

'Have patience, man!' the ruffian said,
'A little we may wait;
But longer shall his wife expect
Her husband at the gate.'

Then Jonathan grew sick at heart;
'My conscience yet is clear!
Jaspar . . it is not yet too late . .
I will not linger here.'

'How now!' cried Jaspar, 'why, I thought
Thy conscience was asleep;
No more such qualms, the night is dark,
The river here is deep.'

'What matters that,' said Jonathan,
Whose blood began to freeze,
'When there is One above whose eye
The deeds of darkness sees?'

'We are safe enough,' said Jaspar then,
'If that be all thy fear!
Nor eye above, nor eye below,
Can pierce the darkness here.'

That instant as the murderer spake
There came a sudden light;
Strong as the mid-day sun it shone,
Though all around was night;

It hung upon the willow tree,
It hung upon the flood,
It gave to view the poplar isle,
And all the scene of blood.

The traveller who journeys there,
He surely hath espied
A madman who has made his home
Upon the river's side.

His cheek is pale, his eye is wild,
His look bespeaks despair;
For Jaspar since that hour has made
His home unshelter'd there.

And fearful are his dreams at night,
And dread to him the day;
He thinks upon his untold crime,
And never dares to pray.

The summer suns, the winter storms,
O'er him unheeded roll,
For heavy is the weight of blood
Upon the maniac's soul.

Bath, 1798.

ST. PATRICK'S PURGATORY

[The last twenty-four stanzas were published in *The Morning Post*, May 8, 1798.]

This Ballad was published (1801) in the *Tales of Wonder*, by Mr. Lewis, who found it among the wefts and strays of the Press. He never knew that it was mine; but after his death I bestowed some pains in recomposing it, because he had thought it worth preserving.

It is founded upon the abridged extract which M. le Grand has given in his *Fabliaux* of a Metrical legend, by Marie de France.

1

'Enter, Sir Knight,' the warden cried,
'And trust in Heaven whate'er betide,
Since you have reach'd this bourn;
But first receive refreshment due,
'Twill then be time to welcome you
If ever you return.'

2

Three sops were brought of bread and wine;
Well might Sir Owen then divine
The mystic warning given,
That he against our ghostly Foe
Must soon to mortal combat go,
And put his trust in Heaven.

3

Sir Owen pass'd the convent gate,
The Warden him conducted straight
To where a coffin lay;
The Monks around in silence stand,
Each with a funeral torch in hand
Whose light bedimm'd the day.

4

'Few Pilgrims ever reach this bourn,'
They said, 'but fewer still return;
Yet, let what will ensue,
Our duties are prescribed and clear;
Put off all mortal weakness here,
This coffin is for you.

5

'Lie there, while we with pious breath
Raise over you the dirge of death,
This comfort we can give;
Belike no living hands may pay
This office to your lifeless clay,
Receive it while you live!'

6

Sir Owen in a shroud was drest,
They placed a cross upon his breast,
And down he laid his head;
Around him stood the funeral train,
And sung with slow and solemn strain
The Service of the Dead.

7

Then to the entrance of the Cave
They led the Christian warrior brave;
Some fear he well might feel,
For none of all the Monks could tell
The terrors of that mystic cell,
Its secrets none reveal.

8

'Now enter here,' the Warden cried,
'And God, Sir Owen, be your guide!
Your name shall live in story:
For of the few who reach this shore,
Still fewer venture to explore
St. Patrick's Purgatory.'

9

Adown the Cavern's long descent,
Feeling his way, Sir Owen went,
With cautious feet and slow;
Unarm'd, for neither sword nor spear,
Nor shield of proof avail'd him here
Against our ghostly Foe.

10

The ground was moist beneath his tread,
Large drops fell heavy on his head,
The air was damp and chill,
And sudden shudderings o'er him came,
And he could feel through all his frame
An icy sharpness thrill.

11

Now steeper grew the dark descent;
In fervent prayer the Pilgrim went,
'Twas silence all around,
Save his own echo from the cell,
And the large drops that frequent fell
With dull and heavy sound.

12

But colder now he felt the cell,
Those heavy drops no longer fell,
Thin grew the piercing air;
And now upon his aching sight,
There dawn'd far off a feeble light,
In hope he hasten'd there.

13

Emerging now once more to day
A frozen waste before him lay,
A desert wild and wide,
Where ice-rocks in a sunless sky,
On ice-rocks piled, and mountains high,
Were heap'd on every side.

14

Impending as about to fall
They seem'd, and had that sight been all,
Enough that sight had been
To make the stoutest courage quail;
For what could courage there avail
Against what then was seen?

15

He saw, as on in faith he past,
Where many a frozen wretch was fast
Within the ice-clefts pent,
Yet living still, and doom'd to bear
In absolute and dumb despair
Their endless punishment.

16

A Voice then spake within his ear,
And fill'd his inmost soul with fear,
'O mortal Man,' it said,
'Adventurers like thyself were these!'
He seem'd to feel his life-blood freeze,
And yet subdued his dread.

17

'O mortal Man,' the Voice pursued,
'Be wise in time! for thine own good
Alone I counsel thee;
Take pity on thyself, retrace
Thy steps, and fly this dolorous place
While yet thy feet are free.

18

'I warn thee once! I warn thee twice!
Behold! that mass of mountain-ice
Is trembling o'er thy head!
One warning is allow'd thee more;
O mortal Man, that warning o'er,
And thou art worse than dead!'

19

Not without fear, Sir Owen still
Held on with strength of righteous will,
In faith and fervent prayer;
When at the word, 'I warn thee thrice!'
Down came the mass of mountain ice,
And overwhelm'd him there.

20

Crush'd though, it seem'd, in every bone,
And sense for suffering left alone,
A living hope remain'd;
In whom he had believed, he knew,
And thence the holy courage grew
That still his soul sustain'd.

21

For he, as he beheld it fall,
Fail'd not in faith on Christ to call,
'Lord, Thou canst save!' he cried;
O heavenly help vouchsafed in need,
When perfect faith is found indeed;
The rocks of ice divide.

22

Like dust before the storm-wind's sway
The shiver'd fragments roll'd away,
And left the passage free;
New strength he feels, all pain is gone,
New life Sir Owen breathes, and on
He goes rejoicingly.

23

Yet other trials he must meet,
For soon a close and piercing heat
Relax'd each loosen'd limb;
The sweat stream'd out from every part,
In short quick beatings toil'd his heart,
His throbbing eyes grew dim.

24

Along the wide and wasted land
A stream of fire through banks of sand
Its molten billows spread;
Thin vapours tremulously light
Hung quivering o'er the glowing white,
The air he breathed was red.

25

A Paradise beyond was seen,
Of shady groves and gardens green,
Fair flowers and fruitful trees,
And flowing fountains cool and clear,
Whose gurgling music reach'd his ear
Borne on the burning breeze.

26

How should he pass that molten flood?
While gazing wistfully he stood,
A Fiend, as in a dream,
'Thus!' answer'd the unutter'd thought,
Stretch'd forth a mighty arm, and caught
And cast him in the stream.

27

Sir Owen groan'd, for then he felt
His eyeballs burn, his marrow melt,
His brain like liquid lead,
And from his heart the boiling blood
Its agonizing course pursued
Through limbs like iron red.

28

Yet, giving way to no despair,
But mindful of the aid of prayer,
'Lord, Thou canst save!' he said;
And then a breath from Eden came,
With life and healing through his frame
The blissful influence spread.

29

No Fiends may now his way oppose,
The gates of Paradise unclose,
Free entrance there is given;
And songs of triumph meet his ear,
Enrapt, Sir Owen seems to hear
The harmonies of Heaven.

30

'Come, Pilgrim! take thy foretaste meet,
Thou who hast trod with fearless feet
St. Patrick's Purgatory,
For after death these seats divine,
Reward eternal, shall be thine,
And thine eternal glory.'

31

Inebriate with the deep delight,
Dim grew the Pilgrim's swimming sight,
His senses died away;
And when to life he woke, before
The Cavern-mouth he saw once more
The light of earthly day.

Westbury, 1798.

THE CROSS ROADS

[Published in *Poems*, vol. ii, 1799.]

The tragedy related in this Ballad happened about the year 1760, in the parish of Bedminster, near Bristol. One who was present at the funeral told me the story and the circumstances of the interment, as I have versified them.

1

THERE was an old man breaking stones
To mend the turnpike way;
He sate him down beside a brook,
And out his bread and cheese he took,
For now it was mid-day.

2

He leant his back against a post,
His foot the brook ran by;
And there were water-cresses growing,
And pleasant was the water's flowing,
For he was hot and dry.

3

A soldier with his knapsack on
Came travelling o'er the down;
The sun was strong and he was tired;
And he of the old man enquired,
'How far to Bristol town?'

4

Half an hour's walk for a young man,
By lanes and fields and stiles;
But you the foot-path do not know,
And if along the road you go
Why then 'tis three good miles.'

5

The soldier took his knapsack off,
For he was hot and dry;
And out his bread and cheese he took,
And he sat down beside the brook
To dine in company.

6

'Old friend! in faith,' the soldier says,
'I envy you almost;
My shoulders have been sorely prest,
And I should like to sit, and rest
My back against that post.

7

'In such a sweltering day as this
A knapsack is the devil
And if on t'other side I sat,
It would not only spoil our chat,
But make me seem uncivil.'

8

The old man laugh'd and moved . . 'I wish
It were a great-arm'd chair!
But this may help a man at need; . .
And yet it was a cursed deed
That ever brought it there.

9

'There's a poor girl lies buried here,
Beneath this very place.
The earth upon her corpse is prest,
This post was driven into her breast,
And a stone is on her face.'

10

The soldier had but just leant back,
And now he half rose up.
'There's sure no harm in dining here,
My friend? and yet, to be sincere,
I should not like to sup.'

11

'God rest her! she is still enough
Who sleeps beneath my feet!'
The old man cried. 'No harm I trow,
She ever did herself, though now
She lies where four roads meet.

12

'I have pass'd by about that hour
When men are not most brave;
It did not make my courage fail,
And I have heard the nightingale
Sing sweetly on her grave.

13

'I have pass'd by about that hour
When ghosts their freedom have ;
But here I saw no ghastly sight,
And quietly the glow-worm's light
Was shining on her grave.

14

'There 's one who like a Christian lies
Beneath the church-tree's shade ;
I'd rather go a long mile round
Than pass at evening through the ground
Wherein that man is laid.

15

'A decent burial that man had,
The bell was heard to toll,
When he was laid in holy ground,
But for all the wealth in Bristol town
I would not be with his soul !

16

'Did'st see a house below the hill
Which the winds and the rains destroy ?
In that farm-house did that man dwell,
And I remember it full well
When I was a growing boy.

17

'But she was a poor parish girl
Who came up from the west :
From service hard she ran away,
And at that house in evil day
Was taken in to rest.

18

'A man of a bad name was he,
An evil life he led ;
Passion made his dark face turn white,
And his grey eyes were large and light,
And in anger they grew red.

19

'The man was bad, the mother worse,
Bad fruit of evil stem ;
'Twould make your hair to stand on end
If I should tell to you, my friend,
The things that were told of them !

20

'Did'st see an out-house standing by ?
The walls alone remain ;
It was a stable then, but now
Its mossy roof has fallen through
All rotted by the rain.

21

'This poor girl she had served with them
Some half-a-year or more,
When she was found hung up one day,
Stiff as a corpse and cold as clay,
Behind that stable door.

22

'It is a wild and lonesome place,
No hut or house is near ;
Should one meet a murderer there alone,
'Twere vain to scream, and the dying groan
Would never reach mortal ear.

23

'And there were strange reports about ;
But still the coroner found
That she by her own hand had died,
And should buried be by the way-side,
And not in Christian ground.

24

'This was the very place he chose,
Just where these four roads meet ;
And I was one among the throng
That hither follow'd them along,
I shall never the sight forget !

25

'They carried her upon a board
In the clothes in which she died ;
I saw the cap blown off her head,
Her face was of a dark dark red,
Her eyes were starting wide :

26

'I think they could not have been closed,
So widely did they strain.
O Lord, it was a ghastly sight,
And it often made me wake at night,
When I saw it in dreams again.

27

'They laid her where these four roads meet
Here in this very place.
The earth upon her corpse was prest,
This post was driven into her breast,
And a stone is on her face.'

Westbury, 1798.

THE PIOUS PAINTER

[First published in *The Morning Post*, November 2, 1798; afterwards in *The Annual Anthology*, 1799, and in *Metrical Tales*, 1805.]

The legend of the Pious Painter is related in the *Pia Hilaria* of Gazaeus; but the Pious Poet has omitted the second part of the story, though it rests upon quite as good authority as the first. It is to be found in the *Fabliaux* of Le Grand.

THE FIRST PART

1

THERE once was a painter in Catholic days,
Like JOB who eschewed all evil;
Still on his Madonnas the curious may gaze
With applause and with pleasure, but chiefly his praise
And delight was in painting the Devil.

2

They were Angels, compared to the Devils he drew,
Who besieged poor St. Anthony's cell;
Such burning hot eyes, such a furnace-like hue!
And round them a sulphurous colouring he threw
That their breath seem'd of brimstone to smell.

3

And now had the artist a picture begun,
'Twas over the Virgin's church-door;
She stood on the Dragon embracing her Son;
Many Devils already the artist had done,
But this must out-do all before.

4

The Old Dragon's imps as they fled through the air,
At seeing it paused on the wing;
For he had the likeness so just to a hair,
That they came as Apollyon himself had been there,
To pay their respects to their King.

5

Every child at beholding it trembled with dread,
And scream'd as he turn'd away quick.
Not an old woman saw it, but, raising her head,
Dropt a bead, made a cross on her wrinkles, and said,
Lord keep me from ugly Old Nick!

6

What the Painter so earnestly thought on by day,
He sometimes would dream of by night;
But once he was startled as sleeping he lay;
'Twas no fancy, no dream, he could plainly survey
That the Devil himself was in sight.

7

'You rascally dauber!' old Beelzebub cries,
'Take heed how you wrong me again!
Though your caricatures for myself I despise,
Make me handsomer now in the multitude's eyes,
Or see if I threaten in vain!'

8

Now the Painter was bold, and religious beside,
And on faith he had certain reliance;
So carefully he the grim countenance eyed,
And thank'd him for sitting with Catholic pride,
And sturdily bade him defiance.

9

Betimes in the morning the Painter arose,
He is ready as soon as 'tis light.
Every look, every line, every feature he knows,
'Tis fresh in his eye, to his labour he goes,
And he has the old Wicked One quite.

10

Happy man! he is sure the resemblance
can't fail;
The tip of the nose is like fire,
There 's his grin and his fangs, and his
dragon-like mail,
And the very identical curl of his
tail, . .
So that nothing is left to desire.

11

He looks and retouches again with
delight;
'Tis a portrait complete to his mind;
And exulting again and again at the
sight,
He looks round for applause, and he sees
with affright
The Original standing behind.

12

'Fool! Idiot!' old Beelzebub grinn'd
as he spoke,
And stampt on the scaffold in ire;
The Painter grew pale, for he knew it
no joke;
'Twas a terrible height, and the scaffold-
ing broke,
The Devil could wish it no higher.

13

'Help . . help! Blessed Mary!' he
cried in alarm,
As the scaffold sunk under his feet.
From the canvas the Virgin extended
her arm,
She caught the good Painter, she saved
him from harm;
There were hundreds who saw in the
street.

14

The Old Dragon fled when the wonder
he spied,
And cursed his own fruitless en-
deavour;
While the Painter call'd after his rage
to deride,
Shook his pallett and brushes in triumph
and cried,
'I'll paint thee more ugly than ever!'

THE PIOUS PAINTER

THE SECOND PART

[First published in *The Morning Post*, July 26, 1799.]

1

The Painter so pious all praise had
acquired
For defying the malice of Hell;
The Monks the unerring resemblance
admired;
Not a Lady lived near but her portrait
desired
From a hand that succeeded so well.

2

One there was to be painted the number
among
Of features most fair to behold;
The country around of fair Marguerite
rung,
Marguerite she was lovely and lively
and young,
Her husband was ugly and old.

3

O Painter, avoid her! O Painter, take
care,
For Satan is watchful for you!
Take heed lest you fall in the Wicked
One's snare,
The net is made ready, O Painter, beware
Of Satan and Marguerite too.

4

She seats herself now, now she lifts up
her head,
On the artist she fixes her eyes;
The colours are ready, the canvas is
spread,
He lays on the white, and he lays on
the red,
And the features of beauty arise.

5

He is come to her eyes, eyes so bright
and so blue!
There 's a look which he cannot
express; . .
His colours are dull to their quick-
sparkling hue; [view,
More and more on the lady he fixes his
On the canvas he looks less and less.

6

In vain he retouches, her eyes sparkle more,
And that look which fair Marguerite gave!
Many Devils the artist had painted of yore,
But he never had tried a live Angel before, . .
St. Anthony, help him and save!

7

He yielded, alas! for the truth must be told,
To the Woman, the Tempter, and Fate.
It was settled the Lady so fair to behold
Should elope from her Husband so ugly and old,
With the Painter so pious of late.

8

Now Satan exults in his vengeance complete,
To the Husband he makes the scheme known;
Night comes and the lovers impatiently meet;
Together they fly, they are seized in the street,
And in prison the Painter is thrown.

9

With Repentance, his only companion, he lies,
And a dismal companion is she!
On a sudden he saw the Old Enemy rise,
'Now, you villainous dauber!' Sir Beelzebub cries,
'You are paid for your insults to me!

10

'But my tender heart you may easily move,
If to what I propose you agree;
That picture, . . be just! the resemblance improve;
Make a handsomer portrait, your chains I'll remove,
And you shall this instant be free.'

11

Overjoy'd, the conditions so easy he hears, [said.
'I'll make you quite handsome!' he
He said, and his chain on the Devil appears;
Released from his prison, released from his fears,
The Painter is snug in his bed.

12

At morn he arises, composes his look,
And proceeds to his work as before;
The people beheld him, the culprit they took;
They thought that the Painter his prison had broke,
And to prison they led him once more.

13

They open the dungeon; . . behold in his place
In the corner old Beelzebub lay;
He smirks and he smiles and he leers with a grace,
That the Painter might catch all the charms of his face,
Then vanish'd in lightning away.

14

Quoth the Painter, 'I trust you'll suspect me no more,
Since you find my assertions were true.
But I'll alter the picture above the Church-door, [before,
For he never vouchsafed me a sitting
And I must give the Devil his due.'

Westbury, 1798.

ST. MICHAEL'S CHAIR

[First published in *The Morning Post*, April 27, 1799; afterwards in *The Annual Anthology*, 1799, and in *Metrical Tales*, 1805. Southey quotes as his authority for the story *Whitaker's Supplement to the First and Second Book of Polwhele's History of Cornwall*, pp. 6, 7.]

MERRILY, merrily rung the bells,
The bells of St. Michael's tower,
When Richard Penlake and Rebecca his wife
Arrived at St. Michael's door.

Richard Penlake was a cheerful man,
Cheerful and frank and free,
But he led a sad life with Rebecca his wife,
For a terrible shrew was she.

Richard Penlake a scolding would take,
Till patience avail'd no longer,
Then Richard Penlake his crab-stick would take,
And show her that he was the stronger.

Rebecca his wife had often wish'd
To sit in St. Michael's chair;
For she should be the mistress then
If she had once sat there.

It chanced that Richard Penlake fell sick,
They thought he would have died;
Rebecca his wife made a vow for his life,
As she knelt by his bed-side.

'Now hear my prayer, St. Michael! and spare
My husband's life,' quoth she;
'And to thine altar we will go,
Six marks to give to thee.'

Richard Penlake repeated the vow,
For woundily sick was he;
'Save me, St. Michael, and we will go
Six marks to give to thee.'

When Richard grew well, Rebecca his wife
Teazed him by night and by day:
'O mine own dear! for you I fear,
If we the vow delay.'

Merrily, merrily rung the bells,
The bells of St. Michael's tower,
When Richard Penlake and Rebecca his wife
Arrived at St. Michael's door.

Six marks they on the altar laid,
And Richard knelt in prayer:
She left him to pray, and stole away
To sit in St. Michael's chair.

Up the tower Rebecca ran,
Round and round and round;
'Twas a giddy sight to stand a-top,
And look upon the ground.

'A curse on the ringers for rocking
The tower!' Rebecca cried,
As over the church battlements
She strode with a long stride.

'A blessing on St. Michael's chair!'
She said as she sat down:
Merrily, merrily rung the bells,
And out Rebecca was thrown.

Tidings to Richard Penlake were brought
That his good wife was dead:
'Now shall we toll for her poor soul
The great church bell?' they said.

'Toll at her burying,' quoth Richard Penlake,
'Toll at her burying,' quoth he;
'But don't disturb the ringers now
In compliment to me.'

Westbury, 1798.

KING HENRY V AND THE HERMIT OF DREUX

[First published in *The Morning Post*, September 24, 1798; afterwards in *The Annual Anthology*, 1799.]

'While Henry V lay at the siege of Dreux, an honest Hermit, unknown to him, came and told him the great evils he brought on Christendom by his unjust ambition, who usurped the kingdom of France, against all manner of right, and contrary to the will of God; wherefore in his holy name he threatened him with a severe and sudden punishment if he desisted not from his enterprise. Henry took this exhortation either as an idle whimsey, or a suggestion of the dauphin's, and was but the more confirmed in his design. But the blow soon followed the threatening; for within some few months after he was smitten with a strange and incurable disease.'—*Mezeray.*

He pass'd unquestion'd through the camp,
Their heads the soldiers bent
In silent reverence, or begg'd
A blessing as he went;
And so the Hermit pass'd along
And reach'd the royal tent.

King Henry sate in his tent alone,
The map before him lay,
Fresh conquests he was planning there
To grace the future day.

King Henry lifted up his eyes
The intruder to behold;
With reverence he the hermit saw,
For the holy man was old,
His look was gentle as a Saint's,
And yet his eye was bold.

'Repent thee, Henry, of the wrongs
Which thou hast done this land!
O King, repent in time, for know
The judgement is at hand.

'I have pass'd forty years of peace
Beside the river Blaise,
But what a weight of woe hast thou
Laid on my latter days!

'I used to see along the stream
The white sail gliding down,
That wafted food in better times
To yonder peaceful town.

'Henry! I never now behold
The white sail gliding down;
Famine, Disease, and Death, and Thou
Destroy that wretched town.

'I used to hear the traveller's voice
As here he pass'd along,
Or maiden as she loiter'd home
Singing her even-song.

'No traveller's voice may now be heard,
In fear he hastens by;
But I have heard the village maid
In vain for succour cry.

'I used to see the youths row down
And watch the dripping oar,
As pleasantly their viol's tones
Came soften'd to the shore.

'King Henry, many a blacken'd corpse
I now see floating down!
Thou man of blood! repent in time,
And leave this leaguer'd town.'

'I shall go on,' King Henry cried,
'And conquer this good land;
Seest thou not, Hermit, that the Lord
Hath given it to my hand?'

The Hermit heard King Henry speak,
And angrily look'd down; . .
His face was gentle, and for that
More solemn was his frown.

'What if no miracle from Heaven
The murderer's arm controul,
Think you for that the weight of blood
Lies lighter on his soul?

'Thou conqueror King, repent in time,
Or dread the coming woe!
For, Henry, thou hast heard the threat
And soon shalt feel the blow!'

King Henry forced a careless smile,
As the Hermit went his way;
But Henry soon remember'd him
Upon his dying day.

Westbury, 1798.

CORNELIUS AGRIPPA

A BALLAD OF A YOUNG MAN THAT WOULD READ UNLAWFUL BOOKS, AND HOW HE WAS PUNISHED.

VERY PITHY AND PROFITABLE.

[First published in *The Morning Post*; afterwards in *The Annual Anthology*, 1799, and in *Metrical Tales*, 1805.]

Cornelius Agrippa went out one day,
His Study he lock'd ere he went away,
And he gave the key of the door to his wife,
And charged her to keep it lock'd on her life.

'And if any one ask my Study to see,
I charge you to trust them not with the key;
Whoever may beg, and entreat, and implore,
On your life let nobody enter that door.'

There lived a young man in the house, who in vain
Access to that Study had sought to obtain;
And he begg'd and pray'd the books to see,
Till the foolish woman gave him the key.

On the Study-table a book there lay,
Which Agrippa himself had been reading that day;
The letters were written with blood therein,
And the leaves were made of dead men's skin;

And these horrible leaves of magic between
Were the ugliest pictures that ever were seen,
The likeness of things so foul to behold,
That what they were is not fit to be told.

The young man, he began to read
He knew not what, but he would proceed,
When there was heard a sound at the door,
Which as he read on grew more and more.

And more and more the knocking grew,
The young man knew not what to do:
But trembling in fear he sat within,
Till the door was broke, and the Devil came in.

Two hideous horns on his head he had got,
Like iron heated nine times red-hot;
The breath of his nostrils was brimstone blue
And his tail like a fiery serpent grew.

'What wouldst thou with me?' the Wicked One cried,
But not a word the young man replied;
Every hair on his head was standing upright,
And his limbs like a palsy shook with affright.

'What wouldst thou with me?' cried the Author of ill;
But the wretched young man was silent still;
Not a word had his lips the power to say,
And his marrow seem'd to be melting away.

'What wouldst thou with me?' the third time he cries,
And a flash of lightning came from his eyes,
And he lifted his griffin claw in the air,
And the young man had not strength for a prayer.

His eyes red fire and fury dart
As out he tore the young man's heart;
He grinn'd a horrible grin at his prey,
And in a clap of thunder vanish'd away.

THE MORAL

Henceforth let all young men take heed
How in a Conjuror's books they read.

Westbury, 1798.

ST. ROMUALD

[First published in *The Morning Post*, February 5, 1799; afterwards in *The Annual Anthology*, 1800, and in *Metrical Tales*, 1805.]

'Les Catalans ayant appris que S. Romuald vouloit quitter leurs pays, en furent très-affligés; ils délibérèrent sur les moyens de l'en empêcher, et le seul qu'ils imaginèrent comme le plus sûr, fut de le tuer, afin de profiter du moins de ses reliques et des guérisons et autres miracles qu'elles opéreroient après sa mort. La dévotion que les Catalans avoient pour lui, ne plut point de tout à S. Romuald; il usa de stratagème et leur échappa.'—*St. Foix, Essais Historiques sur Paris*, t. v, p. 163.

One day, it matters not to know
How many hundred years ago,
A Frenchman stopt at an inn door:
The Landlord came to welcome him, and chat
Of this and that,
For he had seen the Traveller there before.

'Doth holy Romuald dwell
Still in his cell?'
The Traveller ask'd, 'or is the old man dead?'
'No; he has left his loving flock, and we
So great a Christian never more shall see,'
The Landlord answer'd, and he shook his head.
'Ah, Sir! we knew his worth!
If ever there did live a saint on earth!..

Why, Sir, he always used to wear a shirt
For thirty days, all seasons, day and night;
Good man, he knew it was not right
For Dust and Ashes to fall out with Dirt!
And then he only hung it out in the rain,
And put it on again.

'There has been perilous work
With him and the Devil there in yonder cell;
For Satan used to maul him like a Turk.
There they would sometimes fight
All through a winter's night,
From sun-set until morn,
He with a cross, the Devil with his horn;
The Devil spitting fire with might and main
Enough to make St. Michael half afraid:
He splashing holy water till he made
His red hide hiss again,
And the hot vapour fill'd the smoking cell.
This was so common that his face became
All black and yellow with the brimstone flame,
And then he smelt, . . O Lord! how he did smell!

Then, Sir! to see how he would mortify
The flesh! If any one had dainty fare,
Good man, he would come there,
And look at all the delicate things, and cry,
"O Belly, Belly,
You would be gormandizing now, I know;
But it shall not be so! . .
Home to your bread and water . . home,
I tell ye!" '

'But,' quoth the Traveller, 'wherefore did he leave
A flock that knew his saintly worth so well?'
'Why,' said the Landlord, 'Sir, it so befell
He heard unluckily of our intent
To do him a great honour: and you know,
He was not covetous of fame below,
And so by stealth one night away he went.'

'What might this honour be?' the Traveller cried;
'Why, Sir,' the Host replied,
'We thought perhaps that he might one day leave us;
And then should strangers have
The good man's grave,
A loss like that would naturally grieve us,
For he'll be made a Saint of to be sure.
Therefore we thought it prudent to secure
His relics while we might;
And so we meant to strangle him one night.'

Westbury, 1798.

THE ROSE

[Published in *Poems*, vol. ii, 1799. The story on which this poem is based is to be found in *The Voiage and Traivaile of Sir John Maundeville*.]

Nay, Edith! spare the Rose; . . perhaps it lives,
And feels the noontide sun, and drinks refresh'd
The dews of night; let not thy gentle hand
Tear its life-strings asunder, and destroy
The sense of being! . . Why that infidel smile?
Come, I will bribe thee to be merciful;
And thou shalt have a tale of other days,
For I am skill'd in legendary lore,
So thou wilt let it live. There was a time
Ere this, the freshest, sweetest flower that blooms,
Bedeck'd the bowers of earth. Thou hast not heard
How first by miracle its fragrant leaves
Spread to the sun their blushing loveliness.

There dwelt in Bethlehem a Jewish maid,
And Zillah was her name, so passing fair

That all Judea spake the virgin's praise.
He who had seen her eyes' dark radiance
How it reveal'd her soul, and what a soul
Beam'd in the mild effulgence, woe to him!
For not in solitude, for not in crowds,
Might he escape remembrance, nor avoid
Her imaged form which followed every where,
And fill'd the heart, and fix'd the absent eye.
Alas for him! her bosom own'd no love
Save the strong ardour of religious zeal,
For Zillah on her God had center'd all
Her spirit's deep affections. So for her
Her tribes-men sigh'd in vain, yet reverenced
The obdurate virtue that destroy'd their hopes.

One man there was, a vain and wretched man,
Who saw, desired, despaired, and hated her.
His sensual eye had gloated on her cheek
Even till the flush of angry modesty
Gave it new charms, and made him gloat the more.
She loathed the man, for Hamuel's eye was bold,
And the strong workings of brute selfishness
Had moulded his broad features; and she feared
The bitterness of wounded vanity
That with a fiendish hue would overcast
His faint and lying smile. Nor vain her fear,
For Hamuel vow'd revenge, and laid a plot
Against her virgin fame. He spread abroad
Whispers that travel fast, and ill reports
That soon obtain belief; how Zillah's eye,
When in the temple heaven-ward it was raised,
Did swim with rapturous zeal, but there were those
Who had beheld the enthusiast's melting glance
With other feelings fill'd: . . that 'twas a task
Of easy sort to play the saint by day
Before the public eye, but that all eyes
Were closed at night; . . that Zillah's life was foul,
Yea, forfeit to the law.
Shame . . shame to man,
That he should trust so easily the tongue
Which stabs another's fame! The ill report
Was heard, repeated, and believed, . . and soon,
For Hamuel by his well-schemed villainy
Produced such semblances of guilt, . . the Maid
Was to the fire condemn'd.
Without the walls,
There was a barren field; a place abhorr'd,
For it was there where wretched criminals
Receiv'd their death! and there they fix'd the stake,
And piled the fuel round which should consume
The injured Maid, abandon'd, as it seem'd,
By God and Man. The assembled Bethlemites
Beheld the scene, and when they saw the Maid
Bound to the stake, with what calm holiness
She lifted up her patient looks to Heaven,
They doubted of her guilt. With other thoughts
Stood Hamuel near the pile; him savage joy
Led thitherward, but now within his heart
Unwonted feelings stirr'd, and the first pangs
Of wakening guilt, anticipant of Hell.
The eye of Zillah as it glanced around

Fell on the slanderer once, and rested there
A moment: like a dagger did it pierce,
And struck into his soul a cureless wound.
Conscience! thou God within us! not in the hour
Of triumph dost thou spare the guilty wretch,
Not in the hour of infamy and death
Forsake the virtuous! They draw near the stake, . .
They bring the torch! . . hold, hold your erring hands!
Yet quench the rising flames! . . they rise! they spread!
They reach the suffering Maid! oh God protect
The innocent one!
They rose, they spread, they raged; . .
The breath of God went forth; the ascending fire
Beneath its influence bent, and all its flames,
In one long lightning-flash concentrating,
Darted and blasted Hamuel, . . him alone.
Hark! . . what a fearful scream the multitude
Pour forth! . . and yet more miracles! the stake
Branches and buds, and, spreading its green leaves,
Embowers and canopies the innocent Maid
Who there stands glorified; and Roses, then
First seen on earth since Paradise was lost,
Profusely blossom round her, white and red
In all their rich variety of hues;
And fragrance such as our first parents breathed
In Eden she inhales, vouchsafed to her
A presage sure of Paradise regain'd.

Westbury, 1798.

THE LOVER'S ROCK

[First published in *The Morning Post*, April 18, 1798; afterwards in *The Annual Anthology*, 1799. Southey quotes *Mariana* as his authority for the story.]

The Maiden through the favouring night
From Granada took her flight,
She bade her father's house farewell,
And fled away with Manuel.

No Moorish maid might hope to vie
With Laila's cheek or Laila's eye,
No maiden loved with purer truth,
Or ever loved a lovelier youth.

In fear they fled across the plain,
The father's wrath, the captive's chain;
In hope to Seville on they flee,
To peace, and love, and liberty.

Chiuma they have left, and now,
Beneath a precipice's brow,
Where Guadalhorce winds its way,
There in the shade awhile they lay;

For now the sun was near its height,
And she was weary with her flight;
She laid her head on Manuel's breast,
And pleasant was the maiden's rest.

While thus the lovely Laila slept,
A fearful watch young Manuel kept,
Alas! her Father and his train
He sees come speeding o'er the plain.

The Maiden started from her sleep,
They sought for refuge up the steep,
To scale the precipice's brow
Their only hope of safety now.

But them the angry Father sees,
With voice and arm he menaces,
And now the Moors approach the steep,
Loud are his curses, loud and deep.

Then Manuel's heart grew wild with woe,
He loosen'd stones and roll'd below,
He loosen'd crags, for Manuel strove
For life, and liberty, and love.

The ascent was perilous and high,
The Moors they durst not venture nigh,
The fugitives stood safely there,
They stood in safety and despair.

The Moorish chief unmoved could see
His daughter bend her suppliant knee;
He heard his child for pardon plead,
And swore the offenders both should bleed.

He bade the archers bend the bow,
And make the Christian fall below;
He bade the archers aim the dart,
And pierce the Maid's apostate heart.

The archers aim'd their arrows there,
She clasp'd young Manuel in despair,
'Death, Manuel, shall set us free!
Then leap below and die with me.'

He clasp'd her close and cried farewell,
In one another's arms they fell;
And falling o'er the rock's steep side,
In one another's arms they died.

And side by side they there are laid,
The Christian youth and Moorish maid;
But never Cross was planted there,
Because they perish'd for despair.

Yet every Moorish maid can tell
Where Laila lies who loved so well,
And every youth who passes there,
Says for Manuel's soul a prayer.

Westbury, 1798.

GARCI FERRANDEZ

[Published in *The Edinburgh Annual Register* for 1809. The story is to be found in the *Coronica General de España*.]

PART I

1

In an evil day and an hour of woe
Did Garci Ferrandez wed!
He wedded the Lady Argentine,
As ancient stories tell,
He loved the Lady Argentine,
Alas! for what befell!

The Lady Argentine hath fled;
In an evil day and an hour of woe
She hath left the husband who loved her well,
To go to Count Aymerique's bed.

2

Garci Ferrandez was brave and young,
The comeliest of the land;
There was never a knight of Leon in fight
Who could meet the force of his matchless might;
There was never a foe in the infidel band
Who against his dreadful sword could stand;
And yet Count Garci's strong right hand
Was shapely, and soft, and white;
As white and as soft as a lady's hand
Was the hand of the beautiful Knight.

3

In an evil day and an hour of woe
To Garci's Hall did Count Aymerique go;
In an evil hour and a luckless night
From Garci's Hall did he take his flight,
And bear with him that lady bright,
That lady false, his bale and bane.
There was feasting and joy in Count Aymerique's bower,
When he with triumph, and pomp, and pride,
Brought home the adult'ress like a bride:
His daughter only sate in her tower,
She sate in her lonely tower alone,
And for her dead mother she made her moan;
'Methinks,' said she, 'my father for me
Might have brought a bridegroom home.
A stepmother he brings hither instead,
Count Aymerique will not his daughter should wed,
But he brings home a leman for his own bed.'
So thoughts of good and thoughts of ill
Were working thus in Abba's will;
And Argentine with evil intent
Ever to work her woe was bent;
That still she sate in her tower alone,
And in that melancholy gloom,
When for her mother she made her moan,
She wish'd her father too in the tomb.

4

She watches the pilgrims and poor who wait
For daily food at her father's gate.
'I would some Knight were there,' thought she,
'Disguised in pilgrim-weeds for me!
For Aymerique's blessing I would not stay,
Nor he nor his leman should say me nay,
But I with him would wend away.'

5

She watches her handmaid the pittance deal,
They took their dole and went away;
But yonder is one who lingers still
As though he had something in his will,
Some secret which he fain would say;
And close to the portal she sees him go,
He talks with her handmaid in accents low;
Oh then she thought that time went slow,
And long were the minutes that she must wait
Till her handmaid came from the castle-gate.

6

From the castle-gate her handmaid came,
And told her that a knight was there,
Who sought to speak with Abba the fair,
Count Aymerique's beautiful daughter and heir.
She bade the stranger to her bower;
His stature was tall, his features bold,
A goodlier form might never maid
At tilt or tourney hope to see;
And though in pilgrim-weeds array'd,
Yet noble in his weeds was he,
And did his arms in them enfold
As they were robes of royalty.

7

He told his name to the high-born fair,
He said that vengeance led him there.
'Now aid me, lady dear,' quoth he,
'To smite the adult'ress in her pride;
Your wrongs and mine avenged shall be,
And I will take you for my bride.'
He pledged the word of a true Knight,
From out the weeds his hand he drew;
She took the hand that Garci gave,
And then she knew his tale was true,
For she saw the warrior's hand so white,
And she knew the fame of the beautiful Knight.

PART II

1

'Tis the hour of noon,
The bell of the convent hath done,
And the Sexts are begun;
The Count and his leman are gone to their meat.
They look to their pages, and lo they see
Where Abba, a stranger so long before,
The ewer, and bason, and napkin bore;
She came and knelt on her bended knee,
And first to her father minister'd she;
Count Aymerique look'd on his daughter down,
He look'd on her then without a frown.

2

And next to the Lady Argentine
Humbly she went and knelt;
The Lady Argentine the while
A haughty wonder felt;
Her face put on an evil smile;
'I little thought that I should see
The Lady Abba kneel to me
In service of love and courtesy!
Count Aymerique,' the leman cried,
'Is she weary of her solitude,
Or hath she quell'd her pride?'
Abba no angry word replied,
She only raised her eyes and cried,
'Let not the Lady Argentine
Be wroth at ministry of mine!'
She look'd at Aymerique and sigh'd;
'My father will not frown, I ween,
That Abba again at his board should be seen!'
Then Aymerique raised her from her knee,
And kiss'd her eyes, and bade her be
The daughter she was wont to be.

3

The wine hath warm'd Count Aymerique.
That mood his crafty daughter knew;
She came and kiss'd her father's cheek,
And stroked his beard with gentle hand,
And winning eye and action bland,
As she in childhood used to do.
'A boon! Count Aymerique,' quoth she;
'If I have found favour in thy sight,
Let me sleep at my father's feet to-night.
Grant this,' quoth she, 'so I shall see
That you will let your Abba be
The daughter she was wont to be.'
With asking eye did Abba speak,
Her voice was soft and sweet;
The wine had warm'd Count Aymerique,
And when the hour of rest was come,
She lay at her father's feet.

4

In Aymerique's arms the adult'ress lay,
Their talk was of the distant day,
How they from Garci fled away
In the silent hour of night;
And then amid their wanton play
They mock'd the beautiful Knight.
Far, far away his castle lay,
The weary road of many a day;
'And travel long,' they said, 'to him,
It seem'd, was small delight;
And he belike was loth with blood
To stain his hands so white.'
They little thought that Garci then
Heard every scornful word!
They little thought the avenging hand
Was on the avenging sword!
Fearless, unpenitent, unblest,
Without a prayer they sunk to rest,
The adulterer on the leman's breast.

5

Then Abba, listening still in fear,
To hear the breathing long and slow,
At length the appointed signal gave,
And Garci rose and struck the blow.
One blow sufficed for Aymerique, . .
He made no moan, he utter'd no groan;
But his death-start waken'd Argentine,
And by the chamber-lamp she saw
The bloody falchion shine!
She raised for help her in-drawn breath,
But her shriek of fear was her shriek of death.

6

In an evil day and an hour of woe
Did Garci Ferrandez wed!
One wicked wife he has sent to her grave,
He hath taken a worse to his bed.

Bristol, 1801.

BISHOP BRUNO

[First published in *The Morning Post*, November 17, 1798; afterwards in *The Annual Anthology*, 1799, and in *Metrical Tales*, 1805. Southey quotes as his authority for the story here versified a passage in Heywood's *Hierarchie of the Blessed Angels*.]

Bishop Bruno awoke in the dead midnight,
And he heard his heart beat loud with affright:
He dreamt he had rung the Palace bell,
And the sound it gave was his passing knell.

Bishop Bruno smiled at his fears so vain,
He turn'd to sleep and he dreamt again;
He rang at the Palace gate once more,
And Death was the Porter that open'd the door.

He started up at the fearful dream,
And he heard at his window the screech-owl scream;
Bishop Bruno slept no more that night, . .
Oh! glad was he when he saw the day-light!

Now he goes forth in proud array,
For he with the Emperor dines to-day;
There was not a Baron in Germany
That went with a nobler train than he.

Before and behind his soldiers ride,
The people throng'd to see their pride;
They bow'd the head, and the knee they bent,
But nobody blest him as he went.

So he went on stately and proud,
When he heard a voice that cried aloud,
'Ho! ho! Bishop Bruno! you travel with glee, . .
But I would have you know, you travel to me!'

Behind and before and on either side,
He look'd, but nobody he espied;
And the Bishop at that grew cold with fear,
For he heard the words distinct and clear.

And when he rang at the Palace bell,
He almost expected to hear his knell;
And when the Porter turn'd the key,
He almost expected Death to see.

But soon the Bishop recover'd his glee,
For the Emperor welcomed him royally;
And now the tables were spread, and there
Were choicest wines and dainty fare.

And now the Bishop had blest the meat,
When a voice was heard as he sat in his seat, . .
'With the Emperor now you are dining with glee,
But know, Bishop Bruno! you sup with me!'

The Bishop then grew pale with affright,
And suddenly lost his appetite;
All the wine and dainty cheer
Could not comfort his heart that was sick with fear.

But by little and little recovered he,
For the wine went flowing merrily,
Till at length he forgot his former dread,
And his cheeks again grew rosy red.

When he sat down to the royal fare
Bishop Bruno was the saddest man there;
But when the masquers enter'd the hall,
He was the merriest man of all.

Then from amid the masquers' crowd
There went a voice hollow and loud, . .
'You have pass'd the day, Bishop Bruno, in glee;
But you must pass the night with me!'

His cheek grows pale, and his eye-balls glare,
And stiff round his tonsure bristled his hair;
With that there came one from the masquers' band,
And took the Bishop by the hand.

The bony hand suspended his breath,
His marrow grew cold at the touch of Death;
On saints in vain he attempted to call,
Bishop Bruno fell dead in the Palace hall.

Westbury, 1798.

A TRUE BALLAD OF ST. ANTIDIUS, THE POPE, AND THE DEVIL

[Published in *The Morning Post*, 1802, or early in 1803. Southey took the subject of this Ballad from the *Coronica de España*.]

It is Antidius the Bishop
Who now at even tide,
Taking the air and saying a prayer,
Walks by the river side.

The Devil had business that evening,
And he upon earth would go;
For it was in the month of August,
And the weather was close below.

He had his books to settle,
And up to earth he hied,
To do it there in the evening air,
All by the river side.

His imps came flying around him,
Of his affairs to tell;
From the north, and the south, and the east, and the west;
They brought him the news that he liked best,
Of the things they had done,
And the souls they had won,
And how they sped well
In the service of Hell.

There came a devil posting in
Return'd from his employ,
Seven years had he been gone from Hell,
And now he came grinning for joy.

'Seven years,' quoth he, 'of trouble and toil
Have I labour'd the Pope to win;
And I to-day have caught him,
He hath done a deadly sin!'
And then he took the Devil's book,
And wrote the deed therein.

Oh, then King Beelzebub for joy,
He drew his mouth so wide,
You might have seen his iron teeth,
Four and forty from side to side.

He wagg'd his ears, he twisted his tail,
He knew not for joy what to do,
In his hoofs and his horns, in his heels and his corns,
It tickled him all through.

The Bishop who beheld all this,
Straight how to act bethought him;
He leapt upon the Devil's back,
And by the horns he caught him.

And he said a Pater-noster
As fast as he could say,
And made a cross on the Devil's head,
And bade him to Rome away.

Away, away, the Devil flew,
All through the clear moonlight;
I warrant who saw them on their way
He did not sleep that night.

Without bridle, or saddle, or whip, or spur,
Away they go like the wind;
The beads of the Bishop are hanging before,
And the tail of the Devil behind.

They met a Witch and she hail'd them,
As soon as she came within call;
'Ave Maria!' the Bishop exclaim'd,
It frightened her broomstick and she got a fall.

He ran against a shooting star,
So fast for fear did he sail,
And he singed the beard of the Bishop
Against a Comet's tail;
And he pass'd between the horns of the Moon,
With Antidius on his back;
And there was an eclipse that night,
Which was not in the Almanack.

The Bishop just as they set out,
To tell his beads begun;
And he was by the bed of the Pope
Before the string was done.

The Pope fell down upon his knees,
In terror and confusion,
And he confess'd the deadly sin,
And he had absolution.

And all the Popes in bliss that be,
Sung, O be joyful! then;
And all the Popes in bale that be,
They howl'd for envy then;
For they before kept jubilee,
Expecting his good company,
Down in the Devil's den.

But what was this the Pope had done
To bind his soul to Hell?
Ah! that is the mystery of this wonderful history,
And I wish that I could tell!

But would you know, there you must go,
You can easily find the way;
It is a broad and a well-known road
That is travell'd by night and by day.

And you must look in the Devil's book;
You will find one debt that was never paid yet
If you search the leaves throughout;
And that is the mystery of this wonderful history,
And the way to find it out.

Bristol, 1802.

HENRY THE HERMIT

[First published in *The Morning Post*, November 1, 1798; afterwards in *Poems*, vol. ii, 1799. The story is related in the *English Martyrology*, 1608.]

It was a little island where he dwelt,
A solitary islet, bleak and bare,
Short scanty herbage spotting with dark spots
Its grey stone surface. Never mariner
Approach'd that rude and uninviting coast,
Nor ever fisherman his lonely bark
Anchor'd beside its shore. It was a place
Befitting well a rigid anchoret,
Dead to the hopes and vanities and joys,
And purposes of life: and he had dwelt
Many long years upon that lonely isle;
For in ripe manhood he abandon'd arms,
Honours and friends and country and the world,
And had grown old in solitude. That isle
Some solitary man in other times
Had made his dwelling-place; and Henry found
The little chapel which his toil had built
Now by the storms unroof'd, his bed of leaves
Wind-scatter'd; and his grave o'ergrown with grass,
And thistles, whose white seeds there wing'd in vain
Wither'd on rocks, or in the waves were lost.
So he repair'd the chapel's ruin'd roof,
Clear'd the grey lichens from the altar-stone,
And underneath a rock that shelter'd him
From the sea-blast, he built his hermitage.

The peasants from the shore would bring him food,
And beg his prayers; but human converse else
He knew not in that utter solitude;
Nor ever visited the haunts of men,
Save when some sinful wretch on a sick bed
Implored his blessing and his aid in death.
That summons he delay'd not to obey,
Though the night tempest or autumnal wind
Madden'd the waves; and though the mariner,
Albeit relying on his saintly load,
Grew pale to see the peril. Thus he lived
A most austere and self-denying man,
Till abstinence and age and watchfulness
Had worn him down, and it was pain at last
To rise at midnight from his bed of leaves
And bend his knees in prayer. Yet not the less,
Though with reluctance of infirmity,
Rose he at midnight from his bed of leaves
And bent his knees in prayer; but with more zeal,
More self-condemning fervour, raised his voice
Imploring pardon for the natural sin
Of that reluctance, till the atoning prayer
Had satisfied his heart, and given it peace,
And the repented fault became a joy.

One night upon the shore his chapel-bell
Was heard; the air was calm, and its far sounds
Over the water came, distinct and loud.
Alarm'd at that unusual hour to hear
Its toll irregular, a monk arose,
And crost to the island-chapel. On a stone
Henry was sitting there, dead, cold, and stiff,
The bell-rope in his hand, and at his feet
The lamp that stream'd a long unsteady light.

Westbury, 1799.

ST. GUALBERTO

ADDRESSED TO GEORGE BURNETT.

[Published in *The Annual Anthology*, 1800, and in *Metrical Tales*, 1805. Southey quotes Villegas, *Flos Sanctorum*, and other writers, as narrating the stories which he has versified in this ballad.]

1

THE work is done, the fabric is complete;
Distinct the Traveller sees its distant tower,
Yet ere his steps attain the sacred seat,
Must toil for many a league and many an hour.
Elate the Abbot sees the pile and knows,
Stateliest of convents now, his new Moscera rose.

2

Long were the tale that told Moscera's pride,
Its columns cluster'd strength and lofty state,
How many a saint bedeck'd its sculptured side,
What intersecting arches graced its gate;
Its towers how high, its massy walls how strong,
These fairly to describe were sure a tedious song.

3

Yet while the fane rose slowly from the ground,
But little store of charity, I ween,
The passing pilgrim at Moscera found;
And often there the mendicant was seen
Hopeless to turn him from the convent-door,
Because this costly work still kept the brethren poor.

4

Now all is finish'd, and from every side
They flock to view the fabric, young and old.
Who now can tell Rodulfo's secret pride,
When on the Sabbath-day his eyes behold
The multitudes that crowd his church's floor,
Some sure to serve their God, to see Moscera more?

5

So chanced it that Gualberto pass'd that way,
Since sainted for a life of saintly deeds.
He paused the new-rear'd convent to survey,
And o'er the structure whilst his eye proceeds,
Sorrow'd, as one whose holier feelings deem
That ill so proud a pile did humble monks beseem.

6

Him, musing as he stood, Rodulfo saw,
And forth he came to greet the holy guest:
For him he knew as one who held the law
Of Benedict, and each severe behest
So duly kept with such religious care,
That Heaven had oft vouchsafed its wonders to his prayer.

7

'Good brother, welcome!' thus Rodulfo cries,
'In sooth it glads me to behold you here;
It is Gualberto! and mine aged eyes
Did not deceive me: yet full many a year
Hath slipt away, since last you bade farewell
To me your host and my uncomfortable cell.

8

''Twas but a sorry welcome then you found,
And such as suited ill a guest so dear.
The pile was ruinous, the base unsound;
It glads me more to bid you welcome here,
For you can call to mind our former state;
Come, brother, pass with me the new Moscera's gate.'

9

So spake the cheerful Abbot, but no smile
Of answering joy relax'd Gualberto's brow;
He raised his hand and pointed to the pile,
'Moscera better pleased me then, than now;
A palace this, befitting kingly pride!
Will holiness, my friend, in palace pomp abide?'

10

'Ay,' cries Rodulfo, ''tis a stately place!
And pomp becomes the House of Worship well.
Nay, scowl not round with so severe a face!
When earthly kings in seats of grandeur dwell,
Where art exhausted decks the sumptuous hall,
Can poor and sordid huts beseem the Lord of all?'

11

'And ye have rear'd these stately towers on high
To serve your God?' the Monk severe replied.
'It rose from zeal and earnest piety,
And prompted by no worldly thoughts beside.'
'Abbot, to him who prays with soul sincere
However poor the cell, God will incline his ear.

12

'Rodulfo! while this haughty building rose,
Still was the pilgrim welcome at your door?
Did charity relieve the orphan's woes?
Clothed ye the naked? did ye feed the poor?
He who with alms most succours the distrest,
Proud Abbot! know he serves his heavenly Father best.

13

'Did they in sumptuous palaces go dwell
Who first abandon'd all to serve the Lord?
Their place of worship was the desert cell,
Wild fruits and berries spread their frugal board,
And if a brook, like this, ran murmuring by,
They blest their gracious God, and "thought it luxury".'

14

Then anger darken'd in Rodulfo's face;
'Enough of preaching,' sharply he replied;
'Thou art grown envious; . . 'tis a common case,
Humility is made the cloak of pride.
Proud of our home's magnificence are we,
But thou art far more proud in rags and beggary.'

15

With that Gualberto cried in fervent tone,
'O, Father, hear me! If this costly pile
Was for thine honour rear'd, and thine alone,
Bless it, O Father, with thy fostering smile!
Still may it stand, and never evil know,
Long as beside its walls the endless stream shall flow.

16

'But, Lord, if vain and worldly-minded men
Have wasted here the wealth which thou hast lent,
To pamper worldly pride; frown on it then!
Soon be thy vengeance manifestly sent!
Let yonder brook, that gently flows beside,
Now from its base sweep down the unholy house of pride!'

17

He said, . . and lo, the brook no longer flows!
The waters pause, and now they swell on high;
Erect in one collected heap they rose;
The affrighted brethren from Moscera fly,
And upon all the Saints in Heaven they call,
To save them in their flight from that impending fall.

18

Down the heapt waters came, and, with a sound
Like thunder, overthrown the fabric falls;
Swept far and wide its fragments strew the ground,
Prone lie its columns now, its high-arch'd walls,
Earth shakes beneath the onward-rolling tide,
That from its base swept down the unholy house of pride.

. . . . . .

19

Were old Gualberto's reasons built on truth,
Dear George, or like Moscera's base unsound?
This sure I know, that glad am I, in sooth,
He only play'd his pranks on foreign ground;
For had he turn'd the stream on England too,
The Vandal monk had spoilt full many a goodly view.

20

Then Malmesbury's arch had never met my sight,
Nor Battle's vast and venerable pile;
I had not traversed then with such delight
The hallowed ruins of our Alfred's isle,
Where many a pilgrim's curse is well bestow'd
On those who rob its walls to mend the turnpike road.

21

Wells would have fallen, dear George, our country's pride;
And Canning's stately church been rear'd in vain;
Nor had the traveller Ely's tower descried,
Which when thou seest far o'er the fenny plain,
Dear George, I counsel thee to turn that way,
Its ancient beauties sure will well reward delay.

22

And we should never then have heard, I think,
At evening hour, great Tom's tremendous knell.
The fountain streams that now in Christ-church stink
Had niagara'd o'er the quadrangle:
But, as 'twas beauty that deserved the flood,
I ween, dear George, thy own old Pompey might have stood.

23

Then had not Westminster, the house of God,
Served for a concert room, or signal-post;
Old Thames, obedient to the father's nod,
Had swept down Greenwich, England's noblest boast;
And, eager to destroy the unholy walls,
Fleet-ditch had roll'd up hill to overwhelm St. Paul's.

24

George, dost thou deem the legendary deeds
Of saints like this but rubbish, a mere store
Of trash, that he flings time away who reads ?
And would'st thou rather bid me puzzle o'er
Matter and Mind and all the eternal round,
Plunged headlong down the dark and fathomless profound ?

25

Now do I bless the man who undertook
These Monks and Martyrs to biographize ;
And love to ponder o'er his ponderous book,
The mingle-mangle mass of truth and lies,
Where waking fancies mixt with dreams appear,
And blind and honest zeal, and holy faith sincere.

26

All is not truth ; and yet, methinks, 'twere hard
Of wilful fraud such fablers to accuse ;
What if a Monk, from better themes debarr'd,
Should for an edifying story chuse,
How some great Saint the Flesh and Fiend o'ercame,
His taste I trow, and not his conscience, were to blame.

27

No fault of his, if what he thus design'd,
Like pious novels for the use of youth,
Obtain'd such hold upon the simple mind
That 'twas received at length for gospel-truth.
A fair account ! and should'st thou like the plea,
Thank thou our valued friend, dear George, who taught it me.

28

All is not false which seems at first a lie.
Fernan Antolinez, a Spanish knight,
Knelt at the mass, when lo ! the troops hard by
Before the expected hour began the fight.
Though courage, duty, honour, summon'd there,
He chose to forfeit all, not leave the unfinish'd prayer.

29

But while devoutly thus the unarm'd knight
Waits till the holy service should be o'er,
Even then the foremost in the furious fight
Was he beheld to bathe his sword in gore ;
First in the van his plumes were seen to play,
And all to him decreed the glory of the day.

30

The truth is told, and men at once exclaim,
Heaven had his Guardian Angel deign'd to send ;
And thus the tale is handed down to fame.
Now if our good Sir Fernan had a friend
Who in this critical season served him well,
Dear George, the tale is true, and yet no miracle.

31

I am not one who scan with scornful eyes
The dreams which make the enthusiast's best delight ;
Nor thou the legendary lore despise
If of Gualberto yet again I write,
How first impell'd he sought the convent-cell ;
A simple tale it is, but one that pleased me well.

. . . . . .

32

Fortune had smiled upon Gualberto's birth,
The heir of Valdespesa's rich domains;
An only child, he grew in years and worth,
And well repaid a father's anxious pains.
In many a field that father had been tried,
Well for his valour known, and not less known for pride.

33

It chanced that one in kindred near allied
Was slain by his hereditary foe;
Much by his sorrow moved and more by pride,
The father vow'd that blood for blood should flow,
And from his youth Gualberto had been taught
That with unceasing hate should just revenge be sought.

34

Long did they wait; at length the tidings came
That through a lone and unfrequented way
Soon would Anselmo, such the murderer's name,
Pass on his journey home, an easy prey.
'Go,' said the father, 'meet him in the wood!'
And young Gualberto went, and laid in wait for blood.

35

When now the youth was at the forest shade
Arrived, it drew toward the close of day;
Anselmo haply might be long delay'd,
And he, already wearied with his way,
Beneath an ancient oak his limbs reclined,
And thoughts of near revenge alone possess'd his mind.

36

Slow sunk the glorious sun; a roseate light
Spread o'er the forest from his lingering rays;
The glowing clouds upon Gualberto's sight
Soften'd in shade, . . he could not chuse but gaze;
And now a placid greyness clad the heaven,
Save where the west retain'd the last green light of even.

37

Cool breathed the grateful air, and fresher now
The fragrance of the autumnal leaves arose;
The passing gale scarce moved the o'erhanging bough,
And not a sound disturb'd the deep repose,
Save when a falling leaf came fluttering by,
Save the near brooklet's stream that murmur'd quietly.

38

Is there who has not felt the deep delight,
The hush of soul, that scenes like these impart?
The heart they will not soften is not right,
And young Gualberto was not hard of heart.
Yet sure he thinks revenge becomes him well,
When from a neighbouring church he heard the vesper-bell.

39

The Romanist who hears that vesper-bell,
Howe'er employ'd, must send a prayer to Heaven.
In foreign lands I liked the custom well,
For with the calm and sober thoughts of even
It well accords; and wert thou journeying there,
It would not hurt thee, George, to join that vesper-prayer.

40

Gualberto had been duly taught to hold
All pious customs with religious care;
And, . . for the young man's feelings were not cold,
He never yet had miss'd his vesper-prayer.
But strange misgivings now his heart invade,
And when the vesper-bell had ceased he had not pray'd.

41

And wherefore was it that he had not pray'd?
The sudden doubt arose within his mind,
And many a former precept then he weigh'd,
The words of Him who died to save mankind;
How 'twas the meek who should inherit Heaven,
And man must man forgive, if he would be forgiven.

42

Troubled at heart, almost he felt a hope,
That yet some chance his victim might delay.
So as he mused, adown the neighbouring slope
He saw a lonely traveller on his way;
And now he knows the man so much abhorr'd, . .
His holier thoughts are gone, he bares the murderous sword.

43

'The house of Valdespesa gives the blow!
Go, and our vengeance to our kinsman tell!' . . [foe,
Despair and terror seized the unarm'd
And prostrate at the young man's knees he fell,
And stopt his hand and cried, 'Oh, do not take
A wretched sinner's life! mercy, for Jesus' sake!'

44

At that most blessed name, as at a spell,
Conscience, the power within him, smote his heart.
His hand, for murder raised, unharming fell;
He felt cold sweat-drops on his forehead start;
A moment mute in holy horror stood,
Then cried, 'Joy, joy, my God! I have not shed his blood!'

45

He raised Anselmo up, and bade him live,
And bless, for both preserved, that holy name:
And pray'd the astonish'd foeman to forgive
The bloody purpose led by which he came.
Then to the neighbouring church he sped away,
His over-burden'd soul before his God to lay.

46

He ran with breathless speed, . . he reach'd the door,
With rapid throbs his feverish pulses swell; . .
He came to crave for pardon, to adore
For grace vouchsafed; before the cross he fell,
And raised his swimming eyes, and thought that there
He saw the imaged Christ smile favouring on his prayer.

47

A blest illusion! from that very night
The Monk's austerest life devout he led;
And still he felt the enthusiast's deep delight,
Seraphic visions floated round his head,
The joys of heaven foretasted fill'd his soul,
And still the good man's name adorns the sainted roll.

Westbury, 1799.

QUEEN MARY'S CHRISTENING

[Southey quotes as his authorities for the story here versified, *Zurita*, l. ii, c. 59, and *La Historia del muy alto é invencible Rey Don Jayme de Aragon, Primero deste Nombre, llamado El Conquistador*. . .—Valencia, 1584.]

THE first wish of Queen Mary's heart
Is, that she may bear a son,
Who shall inherit in his time
The kingdom of Aragon.

She hath put up prayers to all the Saints
This blessing to accord,
But chiefly she hath call'd upon
The Apostles of our Lord.

The second wish of Queen Mary's heart
Is to have that son call'd James,
Because she thought for a Spanish King
'Twas the best of all good names.

To give him this name of her own will
Is what may not be done,
For having applied to all the Twelve
She may not prefer the one.

By one of their names she hath vow'd to call
Her son, if son it should be;
But which, is a point whereon she must let
The Apostles themselves agree.

Already Queen Mary hath to them
Contracted a grateful debt,
And from their patronage she hoped
For these farther blessings yet.

Alas! it was not her hap to be
As handsome as she was good;
And that her husband King Pedro thought so
She very well understood.

She had lost him from her lawful bed
For lack of personal graces,
And by prayers to them, and a pious deceit,
She had compass'd his embraces.

But if this hope of a son should fail,
All hope must fail with it then,
For she could not expect by a second device
To compass the King again.

Queen Mary hath had her first heart's wish—
She hath brought forth a beautiful boy;
And the bells have rung, and masses been sung,
And bonfires have blazed for joy.

And many's the cask of the good red wine,
And many the cask of the white,
Which was broach'd for joy that morning,
And emptied before it was night.

But now for Queen Mary's second heart's wish,
It must be determined now,
And Bishop Boyl, her Confessor,
Is the person who taught her how.

Twelve waxen tapers he hath had made,
In size and weight the same;
And to each of these twelve tapers
He hath given an Apostle's name.

One holy Nun had bleach'd the wax,
Another the wicks had spun;
And the golden candlesticks were blest,
Which they were set upon.

From that which should burn the longest,
The infant his name must take;
And the Saint who own'd it was to be
His Patron for his name's sake.

A godlier or a goodlier sight
Was nowhere to be seen,
Methinks, that day, in Christendom,
Than in the chamber of that good Queen

Twelve little altars have been there
Erected, for the nonce;
And the twelve tapers are set thereon,
Which are all to be lit at once.

Altars more gorgeously drest
You nowhere could desire;
At each there stood a minist'ring Priest
In his most rich attire.

A high altar hath there been raised,
Where the crucifix you see;
And the sacred Pix that shines with gold
And sparkles with jewelry.

Bishop Boyl, with his precious mitre on,
Hath taken there his stand,
In robes which were embroidered
By the Queen's own royal hand.

In one part of the ante-room
The Ladies of the Queen,
All with their rosaries in hand,
Upon their knees are seen.

In the other part of the ante-room
The Chiefs of the realm you behold,
Ricos Omes, and Bishops and Abbots,
And Knights and Barons bold.

Queen Mary could behold all this
As she lay in her state bed;
And from the pillow needed not
To lift her languid head.

One fear she had, though still her heart
The unwelcome thought eschew'd,
That haply the unlucky lot
Might fall upon St. Jude.

But the Saints, she trusted, that ill chance
Would certainly forefend;
And moreover there was a double hope
Of seeing the wish'd-for end:

Because there was a double chance
For the best of all good names;
If it should not be Santiago himself,
It might be the lesser St. James.

And now Bishop Boyl hath said the mass;
And as soon as the mass was done,
The priests who by the twelve tapers stood
Each instantly lighted one.

The tapers were short and slender too,
Yet to the expectant throng,
Before they to the socket burnt,
The time, I trow, seem'd long.

The first that went out was St. Peter,
The second was St. John;
And now St. Matthias is going,
And now St. Matthew is gone.

Next there went St. Andrew,
There goes St. Philip too;
And see! there is an end
Of St. Bartholomew.

St. Simon is in the snuff;
But it was a matter of doubt
Whether he or St. Thomas could be said
Soonest to have gone out.

There are only three remaining,
St. Jude, and the two Sts. James:
And great was then Queen Mary's hope
For the best of all good names.

Great was then Queen Mary's hope,
But greater her fear, I guess,
When one of the three went out,
And that one was St. James the Less.

They are now within less than quarter-inch,
The only remaining two!
When there came a thief in St. James,
And it made a gutter too!

Up started Queen Mary,
Up she sate in her bed:
'I never can call him Judas!'
She claspt her hands and said.

'I never can call him Judas!'
Again did she exclaim;
'Holy mother preserve us!
It is not a Christian name!'

She spread her hands and claspt them again,
And the Infant in the cradle
Set up a cry, an angry cry,
As loud as he was able.

'Holy Mother preserve us!'
The Queen her prayer renew'd;
When in came a moth at the window
And flutter'd about St. Jude.

St. James hath fallen in the socket,
But as yet the flame is not out,
And St. Jude hath singed the silly moth
That flutters so blindly about.

And before the flame and the molten wax
That silly moth could kill,
It hath beat out St. Jude with its wings,
And St. James is burning still!

Oh, that was a joy for Queen Mary's heart;
The babe is christened James;
The Prince of Aragon hath got
The best of all good names!

Glory to Santiago,
The mighty one in war!
James he is call'd, and he shall be
King James the Conqueror!

Now shall the Crescent wane,
The Cross be set on high
In triumph upon many a Mosque;
Woe, woe to Mawmetry!

Valencia shall be subdued;
Majorca shall be won;
The Moors be routed every where;
Joy, joy, for Aragon!

Shine brighter now, ye stars, that crown
Our Lady del Pilar,
And rejoice in thy grave, Cid Campeador
Ruy Diez de Bivar!

Keswick, 1829.

ROPRECHT THE ROBBER

The story here versified is told by Taylor the Water Poet, in his 'Three Weeks, Three Days, and Three Hours' Observations from London to Hamburgh in Germany; amongst Jews and Gentiles, with Descriptions of Towns and Towers, Castles and Citadels, artificial Gallowses and natural Hangmen; and dedicated for the present to the absent Odcombian Knight Errant, Sir Thomas Coryat.' It is in the volume of his collected works, p. 82, of the third paging.

Collein, which is the scene of this story, is more probably Kollen on the Elbe, in Bohemia, or a town of the same name in Prussia, than Cologne, to which great city the reader will perceive I had good reasons for transferring it.

PART I

Roprecht the Robber is taken at last,
In Cologne they have him fast;
Trial is over, and sentence past;
And hopes of escape were vain he knew,
For the gallows now must have its due.

But though pardon cannot here be bought,
It may for the other world, he thought;
And so to his comfort, with one consent,
The Friars assured their penitent.

Money, they teach him, when rightly given,
Is put out to account with Heaven;
For suffrages therefore his plunder went,
Sinfully gotten, but piously spent.

All Saints, whose shrines are in that city,
They tell him, will on him have pity,
Seeing he hath liberally paid,
In this time of need, for their good aid.

In the Three Kings they bid him confide,
Who there in Cologne lie side by side;
And from the Eleven Thousand Virgins eke,
Intercession for him will they bespeak.

And also a sharer he shall be
In the merits of their community;
All which they promise, he need not fear,
Through Purgatory will carry him clear.

Though the furnace of Babylon could not compare
With the terrible fire that rages there,
Yet they their part will so zealously do,
He shall only but frizzle as he flies through.

And they will help him to die well,
And he shall be hang'd with book and bell;
And moreover with holy water they
Will sprinkle him, ere they turn away.

For buried Roprecht must not be,
He is to be left on the triple tree:
That they who pass along may spy
Where the famous Robber is hanging on high.

Seen is that gibbet far and wide
From the Rhine and from the Dusseldorff side;
And from all roads which cross the sand,
North, south, and west, in that level land.

It will be a comfortable sight
To see him there by day and by night;
For Roprecht the Robber many a year
Had kept the country round in fear.

So the Friars assisted, by special grace,
With book and bell to the fatal place;
And he was hang'd on the triple tree,
With as much honour as man could be.

In his suit of irons he was hung,
They sprinkled him then, and their psalm they sung;
And turning away when this duty was paid,
They said what a goodly end he had made.

The crowd broke up and went their way;
All were gone by the close of day;
And Roprecht the Robber was left there
Hanging alone in the moonlight air.

The last who look'd back for a parting sight,
Beheld him there in the clear moonlight;
But the first who look'd when the morning shone,
Saw in dismay that Roprecht was gone.

PART II

THE stir in Cologne is greater to-day
Than all the bustle of yesterday;
Hundreds and thousands went out to see;
The irons and chains, as well as he,
Were gone, but the rope was left on the tree.

A wonderful thing! for every one said
He had hung till he was dead, dead, dead;
And on the gallows was seen, from noon
Till ten o'clock, in the light of the moon.

Moreover the Hangman was ready to swear
He had done his part with all due care;
And that certainly better hang'd than he
No one ever was, or ever could be.

Neither kith nor kin, to bear him away
And funeral rites in secret pay,
Had he, and none that pains would take,
With risk of the law, for a stranger's sake.

So 'twas thought, because he had died so well,
He was taken away by miracle.
But would he again alive be found?
Or had he been laid in holy ground?

If in holy ground his relics were laid,
Some marvellous sign would show, they said;
If restored to life, a Friar he would be,
Or a holy Hermit certainly,
And die in the odour of sanctity.

That thus it would prove they could not doubt,
Of a man whose end had been so devout;
And to disputing then they fell
About who had wrought this miracle.

Had the Three Kings this mercy shown,
Who were the pride and honour of Cologne?
Or was it an act of proper grace,
From the Army of Virgins of British race,
Who were also the glory of that place?

Pardon, some said, they might presume,
Being a kingly act, from the Kings must come;
But others maintain'd that St. Ursula's heart
Would sooner be moved to the merciful part.

There was one who thought this aid divine
Came from the other bank of the Rhine;
For Roprecht there too had for favour applied,
Because his birth-place was on that side.

To Dusseldorff then the praise might belong,
And its Army of Martyrs, ten thousand strong;
But he for a Dusseldorff man was known,
And no one would listen to him in Cologne,
Where the people would have the whole wonder their own.

The Friars, who help'd him to die so well,
Put in their claim to the miracle;
Greater things than this, as their Annals could tell,
The stock of their merits for sinful men
Had done before, and would do again.

'Twas a whole week's wonder in that great town,
And in all places, up the river and down:
But a greater wonder took place of it then,
For Roprecht was found on the gallows again!

PART III

With that the whole city flocked out to see;
There Roprecht was on the triple tree,
Dead, past all doubt, as dead could be;
But fresh he was as if spells had charm'd him,
And neither wind nor weather had harm'd him.

While the multitude stood in a muse,
One said, I am sure he was hang'd in shoes!
In this the Hangman and all concurr'd;
But now, behold, he was booted and spurr'd!

Plainly therefore it was to be seen,
That somewhere on horseback he had been;
And at this the people marvelled more
Than at any thing which had happen'd before.

For not in riding trim was he
When he disappear'd from the triple tree;
And his suit of irons he still was in,
With the collar that clipp'd him under the chin.

With that this second thought befell,
That perhaps he had not died so well,
Nor had Saints perform'd the miracle;
But rather there was cause to fear,
That the foul Fiend had been busy here!

Roprecht the Robber had long been their curse,
And hanging had only made him worse;
For bad as he was when living, they said
They had rather meet him alive than dead.

What a horse must it be which he had ridden,
No earthly beast could be so bestridden;
And when by a hell-horse a dead rider was carried,
The whole land would be fearfully harried!

So some were for digging a pit in the place,
And burying him there with a stone on his face;
And that hard on his body the earth should be press'd,
And exorcists be sent for to lay him at rest.

But others, whose knowledge was greater, opined
That this corpse was too strong to be confined;
No weight of earth which they could lay
Would hold him down a single day,
If he chose to get up and ride away.

There was no keeping Vampires under ground;
And bad as a Vampire he might be found,
Pests against whom it was understood
Exorcism never had done any good.

But fire, they said, had been proved to be
The only infallible remedy;
So they were for burning the body outright,
Which would put a stop to his riding by night.

Others were for searching the mystery out,
And setting a guard the gallows about,
Who should keep a careful watch, and see
Whether Witch or Devil it might be
That helped him down from the triple tree.

For that there were Witches in the land,
Was what all by this might understand;
And they must not let the occasion slip
For detecting that cursed fellowship.

Some were for this, and some for that,
And some they could not tell for what:
And never was such commotion known
In that great city of Cologne.

PART IV

PIETER SNOYE was a boor of good renown,
Who dwelt about an hour and a half from the town:
And he, while the people were all in debate,
Went quietly in at the city gate.

For Father Kijf he sought about,
His confessor, till he found him out;
But the Father Confessor wonder'd to see
The old man, and what his errand might be.

The good Priest did not wonder less,
When Pieter said he was come to confess;
'Why, Pieter, how can this be so?
I confessed thee some ten days ago!

'Thy conscience, methinks, may be well at rest,
An honest man among the best;
I would that all my flock, like thee,
Kept clear accounts with Heaven and me!'

Always before, without confusion,
Being sure of easy absolution,
Pieter his little slips had summ'd;
But he hesitated now, and he haw'd, and humm'd.

And something so strange the Father saw
In Pieter's looks, and his hum and his haw,
That he began to doubt it was something more
Than a trifle omitted in last week's score.

At length it came out, that in the affair
Of Roprecht the Robber he had some share;
The Confessor then gave a start in fear—
'God grant there have been no witchcraft here!'

Pieter Snoye, who was looking down,
With something between a smile and a frown,
Felt that suspicion move his bile,
And look'd up with more of a frown than a smile.

'Fifty years I, Pieter Snoye,
Have lived in this country, man and boy,
And have always paid the Church her due,
And kept short scores with Heaven and you.

'The Devil himself, though Devil he be,
Would not dare impute that sin to me;
He might charge me as well with heresy:
And if he did, here, in this place,
I'd call him liar, and spit in his face!'

The Father, he saw, cast a gracious eye,
When he heard him thus the Devil defy;
The wrath, of which he had eased his mind,
Left a comfortable sort of warmth behind,

Like what a cheerful cup will impart,
In a social hour, to an honest man's heart:
And he added, 'For all the witchcraft here,
I shall presently make that matter clear.

'Though I am, as you very well know, Father Kijf,
A peaceable man, and keep clear of strife,
It's a queerish business that now I've been in;
But I can't say that it's much of a sin.

'However, it needs must be confess'd,
And as it will set this people at rest,
To come with it at once was best:
Moreover, if I delayed, I thought
That some might perhaps into trouble be brought.

'Under the seal I tell it you,
And you will judge what is best to do,
That no hurt to me and my son may ensue.
No earthly harm have we intended,
And what was ill done, has been well mended.

'I and my son Piet Pieterszoon,
Were returning home by the light of the moon,
From this good city of Cologne,
On the night of the execution day;
And hard by the gibbet was our way.

'About midnight it was we were passing by,
My son, Piet Pieterszoon, and I,
When we heard a moaning as we came near,
Which made us quake at first for fear.

'But the moaning was presently heard again,
And we knew it was nothing ghostly then;
"Lord help us, father!" Piet Pieterszoon said,
"Roprecht, for certain, is not dead!"

'So under the gallows our cart we drive,
And, sure enough, the man was alive;
Because of the irons that he was in,
He was hanging, not by the neck, but the chin.

'The reason why things had got thus wrong,
Was, that the rope had been left too long;
The Hangman's fault—a clumsy rogue,
He is not fit to hang a dog.

'Now Roprecht, as long as the people were there,
Never stirr'd hand or foot in the air;
But when at last he was left alone,
By that time so much of his strength was gone,
That he could do little more than groan.

'Piet and I had been sitting it out,
Till a latish hour, at a christening bout;
And perhaps we were rash, as you may think,
And a little soft or so, for drink.

'Father Kijf, we could not bear
To leave him hanging in misery there;
And 'twas an act of mercy, I cannot but say,
To get him down, and take him away.

'And as you know, all people said
What a goodly end that day he had made;
So we thought for certain, Father Kijf,
That if he were saved he would mend his life.

'My son, Piet Pieterszoon, and I,
We took him down, seeing none was nigh;
And we took off his suit of irons with care,
When we got him home, and we hid him there.

'The secret, as you may guess, was known
To Alit, my wife, but to her alone;
And never sick man, I dare aver,
Was better tended than he was by her.

'Good advice, moreover, as good could be,
He had from Alit my wife, and me;
And no one could promise fairer than he:
So that we and Piet Pieterszoon our son,
Thought that we a very good deed had done.

'You may well think we laughed in our sleeve,
At what the people then seem'd to believe;
Queer enough it was to hear them say,
That the Three Kings took Roprecht away:

'Or that St. Ursula, who is in bliss,
With her Army of Virgins had done this:
The Three Kings and St. Ursula, too,
I warrant, had something better to do.

'Piet Pieterszoon my son, and I,
We heard them talk as we stood by,
And Piet look'd at me with a comical eye.
We thought them fools, but, as you shall see,
Not over-wise ourselves were we.

'For I must tell you, Father Kijf,
That when we told this to Alit my wife,
She at the notion perk'd up with delight,
And said she believed the people were right.

'Had not Roprecht put in the Saints his hope,
And who but they should have loosen'd the rope,
When they saw that no one could intend
To make at the gallows a better end?

'Yes, she said, it was perfectly clear
That there must have been a miracle here;
And we had the happiness to be in it,
Having been brought there just at the minute.

'And therefore it would become us to make
An offering for this favour's sake
To the Three Kings and the Virgins too,
Since we could not tell to which it was due.

'For greater honour there could be none
Than what in this business the Saints had done
To us and Piet Pieterszoon our son;
She talk'd me over, Father Kijf,
With that tongue of hers, did Alit my wife.

'Lord, forgive us! as if the Saints would deign
To come and help such a rogue in grain;
When the only mercy the case could admit
Would have been to make his halter fit!

'That would have made one hanging do
In happy season for him too,
When he was in a proper cue;
And have saved some work, as you will see,
To my son Piet Pieterszoon, and me.

'Well, Father, we kept him at bed and board,
Till his neck was cured and his strength restored;
And we should have sent him off this day
With something to help him on his way.

'But this wicked Roprecht, what did he?
Though he had been saved thus mercifully,
Hanging had done him so little good,
That he took to his old ways as soon as he could.

'Last night, when we were all asleep,
Out of his bed did this gallows-bird creep,
Piet Pieterszoon's boots and spurs he put on,
And stole my best horse, and away he was gone

'Now Alit, my wife, did not sleep so hard,
But she heard the horse's feet in the yard;
And when she jogg'd me, and bade me awake,
My mind misgave me as soon as she spake.

'To the window my good woman went,
And watch'd which way his course he bent;
And in such time as a pipe can be lit,
Our horses were ready with bridle and bit.

'Away, as fast as we could hie,
We went, Piet Pieterszoon and I;
And still on the plain we had him in sight;
The moon did not shine for nothing that night.

'Knowing the ground, and riding fast,
We came up with him at last,
And—would you believe it? Father Kijf,
The ungrateful wretch would have taken my life,
If he had not miss'd his stroke, with a knife!

'The struggle in no long time was done,
Because, you know, we were two to one;
But yet all our strength we were fain to try,
Piet Pieterszoon my son, and I.

'When we had got him on the ground,
We fastened his hands, and his legs we bound;
And across the horse we laid him then,
And brought him back to the house again.

'"We have robbed the gallows and that was ill done!"
Said I, to Piet Pieterszoon my son;
"And restitution we must make
To that same gallows, for justice' sake."

'In his suit of irons the rogue we array'd,
And once again in the cart he was laid!
Night not yet so far was spent,
But there was time enough for our intent;
And back to the triple tree we went.

'His own rope was ready there;
To measure the length we took good care;
And the job which the bungling Hangman begun,
This time, I think, was properly done,
By me and Piet Pieterszoon my son.'

THE YOUNG DRAGON

[Parts I and II were published in *Fraser's Magazine*, April 1830; Parts III and IV in the issues of the same Magazine for June and July 1830, respectively.]

The legend on which this poem is founded is related in the 'Vida y Hazañas del Gran Tamorlan, con la Descripcion de las Tierras de su Imperio y Señorio, escrita por Ruy Gonzalez de Clavijo, Camarero del muy alto y Poderoso Señor Don Enrique, Tercero deste Nombre, Rey de Castilla y de Leon; con un Itinerario de lo Sucedido en la Embajada, que por dicho Señor el Rey hizo al dicho Principe, llamado por otro Nombre Tamurbec, Año del Nacimiento de 1403.'

PART I

PITHYRIAN was a Pagan,
An easy-hearted man,
And Pagan sure he thought to end
As Pagan he began;
Thought he, the one must needs be true,
The old Religion, or the new,
And therefore nothing care I;
I call Diana the Divine;
My daughter worships at the shrine
Of the Christian Goddess, Mary.

In this uncertain matter
If I the wrong course take,
Mary to me will mercy show
For my Marana's sake.
If I am right, and Dian bend
Her dreadful bow, or Phoebus send
His shafts abroad for slaughter,
Safe from their arrows shall I be,
And the twin Deities for me
Will spare my dear-loved daughter.

If every one in Antioch
Had reasoned in this strain,
It never would have raised alarm
In Satan's dark domain.
But Mary's Image every day
Looks down on crowds who come to pray;
Her votaries never falter:
While Dian's temple is so bare,
That unless her Priestess take good care,
She will have a grass-green altar.

Perceiving this, the old Dragon
Inflamed with anger grew; [ills,
Earthquakes and Plagues were common
There needed something new;
Some vengeance so severe and strange
That forepast times in all their range
With no portent could match it:
So for himself a nest he made,
And in that nest an egg he laid,
And down he sate to hatch it.

He built it by the fountain
Of Phlegethon's red flood,
In the innermost abyss, the place
Of central solitude;
Of adamantine blocks unhewn,
With lava scoria interstrewn,
The sole material fitting;
With amianth he lined the nest,
And incombustible asbest,
To bear the fiery sitting.

There with malignant patience
He sate in fell despite,
Till this dracontine cockatrice
Should break its way to light.
Meantime his angry heart to cheer,
He thought that all this while no fear
The Antiocheans stood in,
Of what on deadliest vengeance bent
With imperturbable intent
He there for them was brooding.

The months of incubation
At length were duly past,
And now the infernal Dragon-chick
Hath burst its shell at last;
At which long-look'd-for sight enrapt,
For joy the father Dragon clapt
His brazen wings like thunder,
So loudly that the mighty sound
Was like an earthquake felt around
And all above and under.

The diabolic youngling
Came out no callow birth,
Puling, defenceless, blind and weak,
Like bird or beast of earth;
Or man, most helpless thing of all
That fly, or swim, or creep, or crawl;
But in his perfect figure;
His horns, his dreadful tail, his sting,
Scales, teeth, and claws, and every thing
Complete and in their vigour.

The Old Dragon was delighted,
And proud withal to see
In what perfection he had hatch'd
His hellish progeny;
And round and round, with fold on fold,
His tail about the imp he roll'd
In fond and close enlacement;
And neck round neck with many a turn
He coil'd, which was, you may discern,
Their manner of embracement.

PART II

A VOICE was heard in Antioch,
Whence utter'd none could know,
But from their sleep it waken'd all,
Proclaiming Woe, woe, woe!
It sounded here, it sounded there,
Within, without, and every where,
A terror and a warning;
Repeated thrice the dreadful word
By every living soul was heard
Before the hour of morning.

And in the air a rushing
Pass'd over, in the night;
And as it pass'd, there pass'd with it
A meteoric light;
The blind that piercing light intense
Felt in their long seal'd visual sense,
With sudden short sensation:
The deaf that rushing in the sky
Could hear, and that portentous cry
Reach'd them with consternation.

The astonished Antiocheans
Impatiently await
The break of day, not knowing when
Or what might be their fate.
Alas! what then the people hear,
Only with certitude of fear
Their sinking hearts affrighted;
For in the fertile vale below,
Came news that, in that night of woe,
A Dragon had alighted.

It was no earthly monster
In Libyan deserts nurst;
Nor had the Lerna lake sent forth
This winged worm accurst;
The Old Dragon's own laid egg was this,
The fierce Young Dragon of the abyss,
Who from the fiery fountain,
Through earth's concavities that night
Had made his way, and taken flight
Out of a burning mountain.

A voice that went before him
The cry of woe preferr'd;
The motion of his brazen wings
Was what the deaf had heard;
The flashing of his eyes, that light
The which upon their inward sight
The blind had felt astounded;
What wonder then, when from the wall
They saw him in the vale, if all
With terror were confounded.

Compared to that strong armour
Of scales which he was in,
The hide of a rhinoceros
Was like a lady's skin.
A battering ram might play in vain
Upon his head, with might and main,
Though fifty men had work'd it;
And from his tail they saw him fling
Out, like a rocket, a long sting,
When he for pastime jerk'd it.

To whom of Gods or Heroes
Should they for aid apply?
Where should they look for succour now,
Or whither should they fly?
For now no Demigods were found
Like those whose deathless deeds abound
In ancient song and story;
No Hercules was then on earth,
Nor yet of her St. George's birth
Could Cappadocia glory.

And even these against him
Had found their strength but small;
He could have swallowed Hercules,
Club, lion-skin, and all.
Yea, had St. George himself been there
Upon the fiercest steed that e'er
To battle bore bestrider,
This dreadful Dragon in his might,
One mouthful only, and one bite,
Had made of horse and rider.

They see how unavailing
All human force must prove;
Oh might their earnest prayers obtain
Protection from above!
The Christians sought our Lady's shrine
To invocate her aid divine;
And, with a like emotion,
The Pagans on that fearful day
Took to Diana's fane their way,
And offer'd their devotion.

But there the offended Goddess
Beheld them with a frown;
The indignant altar heaved itself
And shook their offerings down;
The Priestess with a deathlike hue
Pale as the marble Image grew,
The marble Image redden'd;
And these poor suppliants at the sight
Felt in fresh access of affright
Their hearts within them deaden'd.

Behold the marble eyeballs
With life and motion shine!
And from the moving marble lips
There comes a voice divine.
A demon voice, by all the crowd
Distinctly heard, nor low, nor loud,
But deep and clear and thrilling;
And carrying to the soul such dread
That they perforce must what it said
Obey, however unwilling.

Hear! hear! it said, ye people!
The ancient Gods have sent
In anger for your long neglect
This signal punishment.
To mortal Mary vows were paid,
And prayers preferr'd, and offerings made;
Our temples were deserted;
Now, when our vengeance makes ye wise,
Unto your proper Deities
In fear ye have reverted!

Hear now the dreadful judgement
For this which ye have done;
The infernal Dragon will devour
Your daughters, one by one;
A Christian Virgin every day
Ye must present him for his prey,
With garlands deck'd, as meet is:
That with the Christians he begins
Is what, in mercy to your sins,
Ye owe to my entreaties.

Whether, if to my worship
Ye now continue true,
I may, when these are all consumed,
Avert the ill from you:
That on the Ancient Gods depends,
If they be made once more your friends
By your sincere repentance:
But for the present, no delay;
Cast lots among ye, and obey
The inexorable sentence.

PART III

Though to the Pagan priesthood
A triumph this might seem,
Few families there were who thus
Could in their grief misdeem;
For oft in those distracted days,
Parent and child went different ways,
The sister and the brother;
And when, in spirit moved, the wife
Chose one religious course of life,
The husband took the other.

Therefore in every household
Was seen the face of fear;
They who were safe themselves, exposed
In those whom they held dear.
The lists are made, and in the urn
The names are placed to wait their turn
For this far worse than slaughter;
And from that fatal urn, the first
Drawn for this dreadful death accurst
Was of Pithyrian's daughter.

With Christian-like composure
Marana heard her lot,
And though her countenance at first
Grew pale, she trembled not.
Not for herself the Virgin grieved;
She knew in whom she had believed,
Knew that a crown of glory
In Heaven would recompense her worth,
And her good name remain on earth
The theme of sacred story.

Her fears were for her father,
How he should bear this grief,
Poor wretched heathen, if he still
Remain'd in misbelief;
Her looks amid the multitude,
Who struck with deep compassion stood,
Are seeking for Pithyrian:
He cannot bear to meet her eye. [fly,
Where goest thou? whither wouldst thou
Thou miserable Syrian?

Hath sudden hope inspired him,
Or is it in despair
That through the throng he made his way
And sped he knew not where ?
For how could he the sight sustain,
When now the sacrificial train
Inhumanly surround her !
How bear to see her, when with flowers
From rosiers and from jasmine bowers
They like a victim crown'd her !

He knew not why nor whither
So fast he hurried thence,
But felt like one possess'd by some
Controlling influence,
Nor turn'd he to Diana's fane,
Inly assured that prayers were vain
If made for such protection ;
His pagan faith he now forgot,
And the wild way he took was not
His own, but Heaven's direction.

He who had never enter'd
A Christian church till then,
Except in idle mood profane
To view the ways of men,
Now to a Christian church made straight,
And hastened through its open gate,
By his good Angel guided,
And thinking, though he knew not why,
That there some blessed Power on high
Had help for him provided.

Wildly he look'd about him
On many a form divine,
Whose Image o'er its altar stood,
And many a sculptured shrine,
In which believers might behold
Relics more precious than the gold
And jewels which encased them,
With painful search from far and near
Brought to be venerated here
Where piety had placed them.

There stood the Virgin Mother
Crown'd with a starry wreath,
And there the aweful Crucifix
Appear'd to bleed and breathe ;
Martyrs to whom their palm is given,
And sainted Maids who now in Heaven
With glory are invested :
Glancing o'er these his rapid eye
Toward one image that stood nigh
Was drawn, and there it rested.

The countenance that fix'd him
Was of a sun-burnt mien,
The face was like a Prophet's face
Inspired, but yet serene ;
His arms and legs and feet were bare ;
The raiment was of camel's hair,
That, loosely hanging round him,
Fell from the shoulders to the knee ;
And round the loins, though elsewhere free,
A leathern girdle bound him.

With his right arm uplifted
The great Precursor stood,
Thus represented to the life
In carved and painted wood.
Below the real arm was laid
Within a crystal shrine display'd
For public veneration ;
Not now of flesh and blood, . . but bone,
Sinews, and shrivell'd skin alone,
In ghastly preservation.

Moved by a secret impulse
Which he could not withstand,
Let me, Pithyrian cried, adore
That blessed arm and hand !
This day, this miserable day,
My pagan faith I put away,
Abjure it and abhor it ;
And in the Saints I put my trust,
And in the Cross ; and, if I must,
Will die a Martyr for it.

This is the arm whose succour
Heaven brings me here to seek !
Oh let me press it to my lips,
And so its aid bespeak !
A strong faith makes me now presume
That, when to this unhappy doom
A hellish power hath brought her,
The heavenly hand whose mortal mould
I humbly worship, will unfold
Its strength, and save my daughter.

The Sacristan with wonder
And pity heard his prayer,
And placed the relic in his hand,
As he knelt humbly there.
Right thankfully the kneeling man
To that confiding Sacristan
Return'd it, after kissing ;
And he within its crystal shrine
Replaced the precious arm divine,
Nor saw that aught was missing.

PART IV

Oh piety audacious!
Oh boldness of belief!
Oh sacrilegious force of faith,
That then inspired the thief!
Oh wonderful extent of love,
That Saints enthroned in bliss above
Should bear such profanation,
And not by some immediate act,
Striking the offender in the fact,
Prevent the perpetration!

But sure the Saint that impulse
Himself from Heaven had sent,
In mercy predetermining
The marvellous event;
So inconceivable a thought,
Seeming with such irreverence fraught,
Could else have no beginning;
Nor else might such a deed be done,
As then Pithyrian ventured on,
Yet had no fear of sinning.

Not as that Church he enter'd
Did he from it depart,
Like one bewilder'd by his grief,
But confident at heart;
Triumphantly he went his way
And bore the Holy Thumb away,
Elated with his plunder;
That Holy Thumb which well he knew
Could pierce the Dragon through and through,
Like Jupiter's own thunder.

Meantime was meek Marana
For sacrifice array'd,
And now in sad procession forth
They led the flower-crown'd Maid.
Of this infernal triumph vain,
The Pagan Priests precede the train,
Oh hearts devoid of pity!
And to behold the abhorr'd event,
At far or nearer distance, went
The whole of that great city.

The Christians go to succour
The sufferer with their prayers,
The Pagans to a spectacle
Which dreadfully declares,
In this their over-ruling hour,
Their Gods' abominable power;
Yet not without emotion
Of grief, and horror, and remorse,
And natural piety, whose force
Prevail'd o'er false devotion.

The walls and towers are cluster'd,
And every hill and height
That overlooks the vale, is throng'd
For this accursed sight.
Why art thou joyful, thou green Earth?
Wherefore, ye happy Birds, your mirth
Are ye in carols voicing?
And thou, O Sun, in yon blue sky
How canst thou hold thy course on high
This day, as if rejoicing?

Already the procession
Hath pass'd the city gate,
And now along the vale it moves
With solemn pace sedate.
And now the spot before them lies,
Where waiting for his promised prize
The Dragon's chosen haunt is;
Blacken'd beneath his blasting feet,
Though yesterday a green retreat
Beside the clear Orontes.

There the procession halted;
The Priests on either hand
Dividing then, a long array,
In order took their stand.
Midway between, the Maid is left
Alone, of human aid bereft:
The Dragon now hath spied her;
But in that moment of most need,
Arriving breathless with his speed,
Her Father stood beside her.

On came the Dragon rampant,
Half running, half on wing,
His tail uplifted o'er his back
In many a spiral ring;
His scales he ruffled in his pride,
His brazen pennons waving wide
Were gloriously distended;
His nostrils smoked, his eyes flash'd fire,
His lips were drawn, and in his ire
His mighty jaws extended.

On came the Dragon rampant,
Expecting there no check,
And open-mouth'd to swallow both
He stretch'd his burnish'd neck.
Pithyrian put his daughter by,
Waiting for this with watchful eye

And ready to prevent it ;
Within arm's length he let him come,
Then in he threw the Holy Thumb,
And down his throat he sent it.

The hugest brazen mortar
That ever yet fired bomb,
Could not have check'd this fiendish beast
As did that Holy Thumb.
He stagger'd as he wheel'd short round,
His loose feet scraped along the ground,
To lift themselves unable :
His pennons in their weakness flagg'd,
His tail erected late, now dragg'd,
Just like a long wet cable.

A rumbling and a tumbling
Was heard in his inside,
He gasp'd, he panted, he lay down,
He rolled from side to side :
He moan'd, he groan'd, he snuff'd, he snored,
He growl'd, he howl'd, he raved, he roar'd ;
But loud as were his clamours,
Far louder was the inward din,
Like a hundred braziers working in
A caldron with their hammers.

The hammering came faster,
More faint the moaning sound,
And now his body swells, and now
It rises from the ground.
Not upward with his own consent,
Nor borne by his own wings he went,
Their vigour was abated ;
But lifted no one could tell how
By power unseen, with which he now
Was visibly inflated.

Abominable Dragon,
Now art thou overmatch'd,
And better had it been for thee
That thou hadst ne'er been hatch'd ;
For now, distended like a ball
To its full stretch, in sight of all,
The body mounts ascendant ;
The head before, the tail behind,
The wings, like sails that want a wind,
On either side are pendant.

Not without special mercy
Was he thus borne on high,
Till he appear'd no bigger than
An Eagle in the sky.

For when about some three miles height,
Yet still in perfect reach of sight,
Oh, wonder of all wonders !
He burst in pieces, with a sound
Heard for a hundred leagues around,
And like a thousand thunders.

But had that great explosion
Been in the lower sky,
All Antioch would have been laid
In ruins, certainly.
And in that vast assembled rout
Who crowded joyfully about
Pithyrian and his daughter,
The splinters of the monster's hide
Must needs have made on every side
A very dreadful slaughter.

So far the broken pieces
Were now dispersed around,
And shiver'd so to dust, that not
A fragment e'er was found.
The Holy Thumb (so it is thought)
When it this miracle had wrought
At once to Heaven ascended :
As if, when it had thus display'd
Its power, and saved the Christian Maid,
Its work on earth was ended.

But at Constantinople
The arm and hand were shown,
Until the mighty Ottoman
O'erthrew the Grecian throne.
And when the Monks this tale who told
To pious visitors would hold
The holy hand for kissing,
They never fail'd, with faith devout,
In confirmation to point out,
That there the Thumb was missing.

Keswick, 1829.

EPILOGUE TO THE YOUNG DRAGON

I TOLD my tale of the Holy Thumb
That split the Dragon asunder,
And my daughters made great eyes as they heard,
Which were full of delight and wonder.

With listening lips and looks intent,
There sate an eager boy,
Who shouted sometimes and clapt his hands,
And could not sit still for joy.

But when I look'd at my Mistress's face,
It was all too grave the while;
And when I ceased, methought there was more
Of reproof than of praise in her smile.

That smile I read aright, for thus
Reprovingly said she,
'Such tales are meet for youthful ears
But give little content to me.

'From thee far rather would I hear
Some sober, sadder lay,
Such as I oft have heard, well pleased
Before those locks were grey.'

'Nay, Mistress mine,' I made reply,
'The autumn hath its flowers,
Nor ever is the sky more gay
Than in its evening hours.

'Our good old Cat, Earl Tomlemagne,
Upon a warm spring day,
Even like a kitten at its sport,
Is sometimes seen to play.

'That sense which held me back in youth
From all intemperate gladness,
That same good instinct bids me shun
Unprofitable sadness.

'Nor marvel you if I prefer
Of playful themes to sing;
The October grove hath brighter tints
Than Summer or than Spring:

'For o'er the leaves before they fall
Such hues hath Nature thrown,
That the woods wear in sunless days
A sunshine of their own.

'Why should I seek to call forth tears?
The source from whence we weep
Too near the surface lies in youth,
In age it lies too deep.

'Enough of foresight sad, too much
Of retrospect have I;
And well for me that I sometimes
Can put those feelings by:

'From public ills, and thoughts that else
Might weigh me down to earth,
That I can gain some intervals
For healthful, hopeful mirth;

'That I can sport in tales which suit
Young auditors like these,
Yet, if I err not, may content
The few I seek to please.

'I know in what responsive minds
My lightest lay will wake
A sense of pleasure, for its own,
And for its author's sake.

'I know the eyes in which the light
Of memory will appear;
I know the lips which while they read
Will wear a smile sincere:

'The hearts to which my sportive song
The thought of days will bring,
When they and I, whose Winter now
Comes on, were in our Spring.

'And I their well known voices too,
Though far away, can hear,
Distinctly, even as when in dreams
They reach the inward ear.

'"There speaks the man we knew of yore,"
Well pleased I hear them say,
"Such was he in his lighter moods
Before our heads were grey.

'"Buoyant he was in spirit, quick
Of fancy, blithe of heart,
And Care and Time and Change have left
Untouch'd his better part."

'Thus say my morning friends who now
Are in the vale of years,
And I, save such as thus may rise,
Would draw no other tears.'

Keswick, 1829.

A TALE OF PARAGUAY

PREFACE

ONE of my friends observed to me in a letter, that many stories which are said to be *founded* on fact, have in reality been *foundered* on it. This is the case if there be any gross violation committed or ignorance betrayed of historical manners in the prominent parts of a narrative wherein the writer affects to observe them: or when the ground-work is taken from some part of history so popular and well known that any mixture of fiction disturbs the sense of truth. Still more so, if the subject be in itself so momentous that any alloy of invention must of necessity debase it: but most of all in themes drawn from Scripture, whether from the more familiar or the more awful portions; for when what is true is sacred, whatever may be added to it is so surely felt to be false, that it appears profane.

Founded on fact the Poem is, which is here committed to the world: but whatever may be its defects, it is liable to none of these objections. The story is so singular, so simple, and withal so complete, that it must have been injured by any alteration. How faithfully it has been followed, the reader may perceive if he chooses to consult the abridged translation of Dobrizhoffer's History of the Abipones. . .

[In the original Preface Southey here subjoined a long extract from Dobrizhoffer de Abiponibus, Lib. *Prodromus*, pp. 97–106, which it has not been thought necessary to reprint in the present edition.—ED.]

TO EDITH MAY SOUTHEY

1

EDITH! ten years are number'd, since the day,
Which ushers in the cheerful month of May,
To us by thy dear birth, my daughter dear,
Was blest. Thou therefore didst the name partake
Of that sweet month, the sweetest of the year;
But fitlier was it given thee for the sake
Of a good man, thy father's friend sincere,
Who at the font made answer in thy name.
Thy love and reverence rightly may he claim,
For closely hath he been with me allied
In friendship's holy bonds, from that first hour
When in our youth we met on Tejo's side;
Bonds which, defying now all Fortune's power,
Time hath not loosen'd, nor will Death divide.

2

A child more welcome, by indulgent Heaven
Never to parents' tears and prayers was given:
For scarcely eight months at thy happy birth
Had pass'd, since of thy sister we were left, . .
Our first-born, and our only babe, bereft.
Too fair a flower was she for this rude earth!
The features of her beauteous infancy
Have faded from me, like a passing cloud,
Or like the glories of an evening sky:
And seldom hath my tongue pronounced her name,
Since she was summon'd to a happier sphere.
But that dear love, so deeply wounded then,
I in my soul with silent faith sincere
Devoutly cherish till we meet again.

3

I saw thee first with trembling thankfulness,
O daughter of my hopes and of my fears!
Press'd on thy senseless cheek a troubled kiss,
And breathed my blessing over thee with tears.
But memory did not long our bliss alloy;
For gentle nature, who had given relief,
Wean'd with new love the chasten'd heart from grief;
And the sweet season minister'd to joy.

4

It was a season when their leaves and flowers spread;
The trees as to an Arctic summer
When chilling wintry winds and snowy showers,
Which had too long usurp'd the vernal hours,
Like spectres from the sight of morning, fled
Before the presence of that joyous May;
And groves and gardens all the live-long day
Rung with the birds' loud love-songs. Over all,
One thrush was heard from morn till even-fall; lay
Thy Mother well remembers, when she
The happy prisoner of the genial bed,
How from yon lofty poplar's topmost spray
At earliest dawn his thrilling pipe was heard;
And, when the light of evening died away,
That blithe and indefatigable bird
Still his redundant song of joy and love preferr'd.

5

How I have doted on thine infant smiles
At morning, when thine eyes unclosed on mine;
How, as the months in swift succession roll'd,
I mark'd thy human faculties unfold,
And watch'd the dawning of the light divine;
And with what artifice of playful guiles
Won from thy lips with still-repeated wiles
Kiss after kiss, a reckoning often told. . .
Something I ween thou know'st; for thou hast seen
Thy sisters in their turn such fondness prove,
And felt how childhood in its winning years
The attemper'd soul to tenderness can move.
This thou canst tell; but not the hopes and fears
With which a parent's heart doth overflow, . .
The thoughts and cares inwoven with that love, . .
Its nature and its depth, thou dost not, canst not know.

6

The years which since thy birth have pass'd away
May well to thy young retrospect appear
A measureless extent: . . like yesterday
To me, so soon they filled their short career.
To thee discourse of reason have they brought,
With sense of time and change; and something too
Of this precarious state of things have taught,
Where Man abideth never in one stay;
And of mortality a mournful thought.
And I have seen thine eyes suffused in grief,
When I have said that with autumnal grey
The touch of eld hath mark'd thy father's head;
That even the longest day of life is brief,
And mine is falling fast into the yellow leaf.

7

Thy happy nature from the painful thought
With instinct turns, and scarcely canst thou bear
To hear me name the Grave: Thou knowest not there!
How large a portion of my heart is

The faces which I loved in infancy
Are gone; and bosom-friends of riper age,
With whom I fondly talk'd of years to come,
Summon'd before me to their heritage,
Are in the better world, beyond the tomb.
And I have brethren there, and sisters dear,
And dearer babes. I therefore needs must dwell
Often in thought with those whom still I love so well.

8

Thus wilt thou feel in thy maturer mind;
When grief shall be thy portion, thou wilt find
Safe consolation in such thoughts as these, . .
A present refuge in affliction's hour.
And, if indulgent Heaven thy lot should bless
With all imaginable happiness,
Here shalt thou have, my child, beyond all power
Of chance, thy holiest, surest, best delight.
Take therefore now thy Father's latest lay, . .
Perhaps his last; . . and treasure in thine heart
The feelings that its musing strains convey.
A song it is of life's declining day,
Yet meet for youth. Vain passions to excite,
No strains of morbid sentiment I sing,
Nor tell of idle loves with ill-spent breath;
A reverent offering to the Grave I bring,
And twine a garland for the brow of Death.

Keswick, 1814.

PROEM

THAT was a memorable day for Spain,
When on Pamplona's towers, so basely won, [the plain
The Frenchmen stood, and saw upon
Their long-expected succours hastening on: [array,
Exultingly they mark'd the brave
And deem'd their leader should his purpose gain,
Though Wellington and England barr'd the way.
Anon the bayonets glitter'd in the sun,
And frequent cannon flash'd, whose lurid light
Redden'd through sulphurous smoke; fast volleying round
Roll'd the war-thunders, and with long rebound
Backward from many a rock and cloud-capt height
In answering peals Pyrene sent th sound.
Impatient for relief, toward the fight
The hungry garrison their eye-balls strain:
Vain was the Frenchman's skill, his valour vain;
And even then, when eager hope almost [prayer,
Had moved their irreligious lips to
Averting from the fatal scene their sight, [despair.
They breathed the execrations of
For Wellesley's star hath risen ascendant there;
Once more he drove the host of France to flight,
And triumph'd once again for God and for the right.

That was a day, whose influence far and wide [a joy
The struggling nations felt; it was
Wherewith all Europe rung from side to side. [time
Yet hath Pamplona seen in former
A moment big with mightier consequence, [clime.
Affecting many an age and distant
That day it was which saw in her defence,

Contending with the French before her wall,
A noble soldier of Guipuzcoa fall,
Sore hurt, but not to death. For when long care
Restored his shatter'd leg and set him free, [formity,
He would not brook a slight de-
As one who, being gay and debonnair,
In courts conspicuous as in camps must be:
So he forsooth a shapely boot must wear; [life,
And the vain man, with peril of his
Laid the recover'd limb again beneath the knife.

Long time upon the bed of pain he lay
Whiling with books the weary hours away;
And from that circumstance and this vain man [began,
A train of long events their course
Whose term it is not given us yet to see. [name,
Who hath not heard Loyola's sainted
Before whom Kings and Nations bow'd the knee?
Thy annals, Ethiopia, might proclaim
What deeds arose from that prolific day;
And of dark plots might shuddering Europe tell.

But Science too her trophies would display;
Faith give the martyrs of Japan their fame; [dwell
And Charity on works of love would
In California's dolorous regions drear;
And where, amid a pathless world of wood, [way,
Gathering a thousand rivers on his
Huge Orellana rolls his affluent flood;
And where the happier sons of Paraguay,
By gentleness and pious art subdued,
Bow'd their meek heads beneath the Jesuits' sway,
And lived and died in filial servitude.

I love thus uncontroll'd, as in a dream,
To muse upon the course of human things;
Exploring sometimes the remotest springs, [gleam;
Far as tradition lends one guiding
Or following, upon Thought's audacious wings,
Into Futurity, the endless stream.
But now, in quest of no ambitious height, [way,
I go where Truth and Nature lead my
And, ceasing here from desultory flight,
In measured strains I tell a Tale of Paraguay.

A TALE OF PARAGUAY

CANTO I

1

JENNER! for ever shall thy honour'd name [blest,
Among the children of mankind be
Who by thy skill hast taught us how to tame [pest
One dire disease, . . the lamentable
Which Africa sent forth to scourge the West,
As if in vengeance for her sable brood
So many an age remorselessly oppress.
For that most fearful malady subdued
Receive a poet's praise, a father's gratitude.

2

Fair promise be this triumph of an age,
When Man, with vain desires no longer blind,
And wise though late, his only war shall wage [mankind,
Against the miseries which afflict
Striving with virtuous heart and strenuous mind [away.
Till evil from the earth shall pass
Lo, this his glorious destiny assign'd!
For that blest consummation let us pray,
And trust in fervent faith, and labour as we may.

3

The hideous malady which lost its power
When Jenner's art the dire contagion stay'd,
Among Columbia's sons, in fatal hour
Across the wide Atlantic wave convey'd,
Its fiercest form of pestilence display'd:
Where'er its deadly course the plague began
Vainly the wretched sufferer look'd for aid;
Parent from child, and child from parent ran,
For tyrannous fear dissolved all natural bonds of man.

4

A feeble nation of Guarani race,
Thinn'd by perpetual wars, but unsubdued,
Had taken up at length a resting-place
Among those tracts of lake and swamp and wood,
Where Mondai issuing from its solitude
Flows with slow stream to Empalado's bed.
It was a region desolate and rude;
But thither had the horde for safety fled,
And being there conceal'd in peace their lives they led.

5

There had the tribe a safe asylum found
Amid those marshes wide and woodlands dense,
With pathless wilds and waters spread around,
And labyrinthine swamps, a sure defence
From human foes, . . but not from pestilence.
The spotted plague appear'd, that direst ill, . .
How brought among them none could tell, or whence;
The mortal seed had lain among them still,
And quicken'd now to work the Lord's mysterious will.

6

Alas, it was no medicable grief
Which herbs might reach! Nor could the juggler's power
With all his antic mummeries bring relief.
Faith might not aid him in that ruling hour,
Himself a victim now. The dreadful stour
None could escape, nor aught its force assuage.
The marriageable maiden had her dower
From death; the strong man sunk beneath its rage,
And death cut short the thread of childhood and of age.

7

No time for customary mourning now;
With hand close-clench'd to pluck the rooted hair,
To beat the bosom, on the swelling brow
Inflict redoubled blows, and blindly tear
The cheeks, indenting bloody furrows there,
The deep-traced signs indelible of woe;
Then to some crag, or bank abrupt, repair,
And, giving grief its scope, infuriate throw
The impatient body thence upon the earth below.

8

Devices these by poor weak nature taught,
Which thus a change of suffering would obtain;
And, flying from intolerable thought
And piercing recollections, would full fain
Distract itself by sense of fleshly pain
From anguish that the soul must else endure.
Easier all outward torments to sustain,
Than those heart-wounds which only time can cure,
And He in whom alone the hopes of man are sure.

9

None sorrow'd here ; the sense of woe
was sear'd, [ill.
When every one endured his own sore
The prostrate sufferers neither hoped
nor fear'd ;
The body labour'd, but the heart
was still : . .
So let the conquering malady fulfil
Its fatal course, rest cometh at the
end ! [will
Passive they lay with neither wish nor
For aught but this ; nor did they long
attend
That welcome boon from death, the
never-failing friend.

10

Who is there to make ready now the
pit,
The house that will content from this
day forth
Its easy tenant ? Who in vestments fit
Shall swathe the sleeper for his bed of
earth,
Now tractable as when a babe at
birth ?
Who now the ample funeral urn shall
knead,
And burying it beneath his proper
hearth
Deposit there with careful hands the
dead,
And lightly then relay the floor above
his head ?

11

Unwept, unshrouded, and unsepul-
chred,
The hammock where they hang for
winding sheet
And grave suffices the deserted dead :
There from the armadillo's searching
feet
Safer than if within the tomb's re-
treat.
The carrion birds obscene in vain essay
To find that quarry : round and
round they beat
The air, but fear to enter for their
prey,
And from the silent door the jaguar
turns away.

12

But nature for her universal law
Hath other surer instruments in store,
Whom from the haunts of men no
wonted awe
Withholds as with a spell. In
swarms they pour
From wood and swamp : and when
their work is o'er,
On the white bones the mouldering
roof will fall ;
Seeds will take root, and spring in sun
and shower ;
And Mother Earth ere long with her
green pall,
Resuming to herself the wreck, will
cover all.

13

Oh ! better thus with earth to have
their part,
Than in Egyptian catacombs to lie,
Age after age preserved by horrid art,
In ghastly image of humanity !
Strange pride that with corruption
thus would vie !
And strange delusion that would thus
maintain
The fleshly form, till cycles shall pass
by,
And in the series of the eternal chain,
The spirit come to seek its old abode
again.

14

One pair alone survived the general
fate ;
Left in such drear and mournful
solitude,
That death might seem a preferable
state.
Not more deprest the Arkite patriarch
stood,
When landing first on Ararat he
view'd,
Where all around the mountain
summits lay,
Like islands seen amid the boundless
flood :
Nor our first parents more forlorn
than they,
Through Eden when they took their
solitary way.

15

Alike to them, it seem'd in their despair,
Whither they wander'd from the infected spot.
Chance might direct their steps: they took no care;
Come well or ill to them, it matter'd not!
Left as they were in that unhappy lot,
The sole survivors they of all their race,
They reck'd not when their fate, nor where, nor what,
In this resignment to their hopeless case,
Indifferent to all choice or circumstance of place.

16

That palsying stupor pass'd away ere long,
And, as the spring of health resum'd its power,
They felt that life was dear, and hope was strong.
What marvel? 'Twas with them the morning hour,
When bliss appears to be the natural dower
Of all the creatures of this joyous earth;
And sorrow fleeting like a vernal shower
Scarce interrupts the current of our mirth;
Such is the happy heart we bring with us at birth.

17

Though of his nature and his boundless love
Erring, yet tutor'd by instinctive sense,
They rightly deem'd the Power who rules above
That favouring Power would still be pestilence.
Had saved them from the wasting their defence:
Thus were they by their late deliverance taught
To place a child-like trust in Providence,
And in their state forlorn they found this thought
Of natural faith with hope and consolation fraught.

18

And now they built themselves a leafy bower,
Amid a glade, slow Mondai's stream beside,
Screen'd from the southern blast of piercing power:
Not like their native dwelling, long and wide,
By skilful toil of numbers edified,
The common home of all, their human nest,
Where threescore hammocks pendant side by side
Were ranged, and on the ground the fires were drest;
Alas, that populous hive hath now no living guest!

19

A few firm stakes they planted in the ground,
Circling a narrow space, yet large enow;
These strongly interknit they closed around
With basket-work of many a pliant bough.
The roof was like the sides; the door was low,
And rude the hut, and trimm'd with little care,
For little heart had they to dress it now;
Yet was the humble structure fresh and fair,
And soon its inmates found that love might sojourn there.

20

Quiara could recall to mind the course
Of twenty summers; perfectly he knew
Whate'er his fathers taught of skill or force.
Right to the mark his whizzing lance he threw,
And from his bow the unerring arrow flew
With fatal aim: and when the laden bee
Buzz'd by him in its flight, he could pursue
Its path with certain ken, and follow free
Until he traced the hive in hidden bank or tree.

21

Of answering years was Monnema, nor less [ways.
Expert in all her sex's household
The Indian weed she skilfully could dress;
And in what depth to drop the yellow maize
She knew, and when around its stem to raise
The lighten'd soil; and well could she prepare
Its ripen'd seed for food, her proper praise; [care
Or in the embers turn with frequent
Its succulent head yet green, sometimes for daintier fare.

22

And how to macerate the bark she knew,
And draw apart its beaten fibres fine,
And, bleaching them in sun, and air, and dew,
From dry and glossy filaments entwine
With rapid twirl of hand the lengthening line;
Next, interknitting well the twisted thread, [combine,
In many an even mesh its knots
And shape in tapering length the pensile bed,
Light hammock there to hang beneath the leafy shed.

23

Time had been when, expert in works of clay,
She lent her hands the swelling urn to mould,
And fill'd it for the appointed festal day [bold
With the beloved beverage which the
Quaff'd in their triumph and their joy of old; [rude,
The fruitful cause of many an uproar
When, in their drunken bravery uncontroll'd,
Some bitter jest awoke the dormant feud,
And wrath and rage and strife and wounds and death ensued.

24

These occupations were gone by: the skill
Was useless now, which once had been her pride.
Content were they, when thirst impell'd, to fill
The dry and hollow gourd from Mondai's side;
The river from its sluggish bed supplied
A draught for repetition all unmeet;
Howbeit the bodily want was satisfied,
No feverish pulse ensued, nor ireful heat,
Their days were undisturb'd, their natural sleep was sweet.

25

She too had learnt in youth how best to trim [day,
The honour'd Chief for his triumphal
And covering with soft gums the obedient limb
And body, then with feathers overlay,
In regular hues disposed, a rich display.
Well-pleased the glorious savage stood and eyed
The growing work; then vain of his array
Look'd with complacent frown from side to side,
Stalk'd with elater step, and swell'd with statelier pride.

26

Feasts and carousals, vanity and strife,
Could have no place with them in solitude
To break the tenor of their even life.
Quiara day by day his game pursued,
Searching the air, the water, and the wood,
With hawk-like eye, and arrow sure as fate; [food:
And Monnema prepared the hunter's
Cast with him here in this forlorn estate,
In all things for the man was she a fitting mate.

27

The Moon had gather'd oft her monthly store
Of light, and oft in darkness left the sky, [bore
Since Monnema a growing burthen
Of life and hope. The appointed weeks go by;
And now her hour is come, and none is nigh
To help: but human help she needed none.
A few short throes endured with scarce a cry, [son,
Upon the bank she laid her new-born
Then slid into the stream, and bathed, and all was done.

28

Might old observances have there been kept,
Then should the husband to that pensile bed,
Like one exhausted with the birth have crept, [head,
And, laying down in feeble guise his
For many a day been nursed and dieted [due.
With tender care, to childing mothers
Certes a custom strange, and yet far spread
Through many a savage tribe, howe'er it grew,
And once in the old world known as widely as the new.

29

This could not then be done; he might not lay
The bow and those unerring shafts aside;
Nor through the appointed weeks forego the prey, [wide,
Still to be sought amid those regions
None being there who should the while provide
That lonely household with their needful food:
So still Quiara through the forest plied
His daily task, and in the thickest wood
Still laid his snares for birds, and still the chase pursued.

30

But seldom may such thoughts of mingled joy
A father's agitated breast dilate,
As when he first beheld that infant boy.
Who hath not proved it, ill can estimate
The feeling of that stirring hour, . . the weight
Of that new sense, the thoughtful, pensive bliss.
In all the changes of our changeful state,
Even from the cradle to the grave, I wis,
The heart doth undergo no change so great as this.

31

A deeper and unwonted feeling fill'd
These parents, gazing on their new-born son.
Already in their busy hopes they build
On this frail sand. Now let the seasons run, [done
And let the natural work of time be
With them, . . for unto them a child is born:
And when the hand of Death may reach the one,
The other will not now be left to mourn
A solitary wretch, all utterly forlorn.

32

Thus Monnema and thus Quiara thought,
Though each the melancholy thought repress;
They could not choose but feel, yet utter'd not
The human feeling, which in hours of rest
Often would rise, and fill the boding breast
With a dread foretaste of that mournful day,
When, at the inexorable Power's behest, [away,
The unwilling spirit, called perforce
Must leave, for ever leave, its dear connatural clay.

33

Link'd as they were, where each to each was all,
How might the poor survivor hope to bear
That heaviest loss which one day must befall,
Nor sink beneath the weight of his despair?
Scarce could the heart even for a moment dare
That miserable time to contemplate,
When the dread Messenger should find them there,
From whom is no escape, . . and reckless Fate,
Whom it had bound so close, for ever separate.

34

Lighter that burthen lay upon the heart
When this dear babe was born to share their lot;
They could endure to think that they must part.
Then too a glad consolatory thought
Arose, while gazing on the child they sought
With hope their dreary prospect to delude,
Till they almost believed, as fancy taught,
How that from them a tribe should spring renew'd,
To people and possess that ample solitude.

35

Such hope they felt, but felt that whatsoe'er
The undiscoverable to come might prove,
Unwise it were to let that bootless care
Disturb the present hours of peace and love.
For they had gain'd a happiness above
The state which in their native horde was known:
No outward causes were there here to move
Discord and alien thoughts; being thus alone
From all mankind, their hearts and their desires were one.

36

Different their love in kind and in degree
From what their poor depraved forefathers knew,
With whom degenerate instincts were left free
To take their course, and blindly to pursue,
Unheeding they the ills that must ensue,
The bent of brute desire. No moral tie
Bound the hard husband to his servile crew
Of wives; and they the chance of change might try,
All love destroy'd by such preposterous liberty.

37

Far other tie this solitary pair
Indissolubly bound; true helpmates they,
In joy or grief, in weal or woe to share,
In sickness or in health, through life's long day;
And reassuming in their hearts her sway
Benignant Nature made the burthen light.
It was the Woman's pleasure to obey,
The Man's to ease her toil in all he might,
So each in serving each obtain'd the best delight.

38

And as connubial, so parental love
Obey'd unerring Nature's order here,
For now no force of impious custom strove
Against her law; . . such as was wont to sear
The unhappy heart with usages severe,
Till harden'd mothers in the grave could lay
Their living babes with no compunctious tear;
So monstrous men become, when from the way
Of primal light they turn thro' heathen paths astray.

39

Deliver'd from this yoke, in them henceforth
The springs of natural love may freely flow:
New joys, new virtues with that happy birth
Are born, and with the growing infant grow.
Source of our purest happiness below
Is that benignant law which hath entwined
Dearest delight with strongest duty so,
That in the healthy heart and righteous mind
Ever they co-exist, inseparably combined.

40

Oh! bliss for them when in that infant face
They now the unfolding faculties descry,
And fondly gazing, trace . . or think they trace
The first faint speculation in that eye,
Which hitherto hath roll'd in vacancy!
Oh! bliss in that soft countenance to seek
Some mark of recognition, and espy
The quiet smile which in the innocent cheek
Of kindness and of kind its consciousness doth speak!

41

For him, if born among their native tribe,
Some haughty name his parents had thought good,
As weening that therewith they should ascribe
The strength of some fierce tenant of the wood,
The water, or the aërial solitude,
Jaguar or vulture, water-wolf or snake,
The beast that prowls abroad in search of blood,
Or reptile that within the treacherous brake
Waits for the prey, uncoil'd, its hunger to aslake.

42

Now soften'd as their spirits were by love,
Abhorrent from such thoughts they turn'd away;
And, with a happier feeling, from the dove,
They named the Child Yeruti. On a day
When smiling at his mother's breast in play,
They in his tones of murmuring pleasure heard
A sweet resemblance of the stock-dove's lay,
Fondly they named him from that gentle bird,
And soon such happy use endear'd the fitting word.

43

Days pass, and moons have wax'd and waned, and still
This dovelet nestled in their leafy bower
Obtains increase of sense, and strength and will,
As in due order many a latent power
Expands, . . humanity's exalted dower:
And they, while thus the days serenely fled,
Beheld him flourish like a vigorous flower,
Which, lifting from a genial soil its head,
By seasonable suns and kindly showers is fed.

44

Ere long the cares of helpless babyhood
To the next stage of infancy give place,
That age with sense of conscious growth endued,
When every gesture hath its proper grace:
Then come the unsteady step, the tottering pace;
And watchful hopes and emulous thoughts appear;
The imitative lips essay to trace
Their words, observant both with eye and ear,
In mutilated sounds which parents love to hear.

45

Serenely thus the seasons pass away ;
And, oh ! how rapidly they seem to fly [to-day
With those for whom to-morrow like
Glides on in peaceful uniformity ! 400
Five years have since Yeruti's birth gone by,
Five happy years! .. and, ere the Moon which then
Hung like a Sylphid's light canoe on high
Should fill its circle, Monnema again
Laying her burthen down must bear a mother's pain.

46

Alas, a keener pang before that day
Must by the wretched Monnema be borne !
In quest of game Quiara went his way
To roam the wilds as he was wont, one morn ;
She look'd in vain at eve for his return. 410
By moonlight through the midnight solitude
She sought him ; and she found his garment torn,
His bow and useless arrows in the wood,
Marks of a jaguar's feet, a broken spear, and blood.

CANTO II

1

O THOU who listening to the Poet's song
Dost yield thy willing spirit to his sway,
Look not that I should painfully prolong
The sad narration of that fatal day
With tragic details : all too true the lay !
Nor is my purpose e'er to entertain
The heart with useless grief ; but, as I may,
Blend in my calm and meditative strain [pain.
Consolatory thoughts, the balm for real

2

O Youth or Maiden, whosoe'er thou art, 10
Safe in my guidance may thy spirit be ;
I wound not wantonly the tender heart :
And if sometimes a tear of sympathy
Should rise, it will from bitterness be free . .
Yea, with a healing virtue be endued,
As thou in this true tale shalt hear from me
Of evils overcome, and grief subdued,
And virtues springing up like flowers in solitude.

3

The unhappy Monnema, when thus bereft,
Sunk not beneath the desolating blow. 20
Widow'd she was : but still her child was left ;
For him must she sustain the weight of woe,
Which else would in that hour have have laid her low.
Nor wish'd she now the work of death complete :
Then only doth the soul of woman know
Its proper strength, when love and duty meet ;
Invincible the heart wherein they have their seat.

4

The seamen, who upon some coral reef
Are cast amid the interminable main,
Still cling to life, and, hoping for relief,
Drag on their days of wretchedness and pain. 31
In turtle shells they hoard the scanty rain,
And eat its flesh, sun-dried for lack of fire,
Till the weak body can no more sustain
Its wants, but sinks beneath its sufferings dire ;
Most miserable man who sees the rest expire !

5

He lingers there while months and years go by :
And holds his hope though months and years have past ;
And still at morning round the farthest sky,
And still at eve his eagle glance is cast,
If there he may behold the far-off mast
Arise, for which he hath not ceased to pray.
And if perchance a ship should come at last,
And bear him from that dismal bank away,
He blesses God that he hath lived to see that day.

6

So strong a hold hath life upon the soul,
Which sees no dawning of eternal light,
But subject to this mortal frame's controul,
Forgetful of its origin and right,
Content in bondage dwells and utter night.
By worthier ties was this poor mother bound
To life ; even while her grief was at the height,
Then in maternal love support she found,
And in maternal cares a healing for her wound.

7

For now her hour is come : a girl is born,
Poor infant, all unconscious of its fate,
How passing strange, how utterly forlorn !
The genial season served to mitigate
In all it might their sorrowful estate,
Supplying to the mother at her door
From neighbouring trees, which bent beneath their weight,
A full supply of fruitage now mature,
So in that time of need their sustenance was sure.

8

Nor then alone, but alway did the Eye
Of Mercy look upon that lonely bower.
Days pass'd, and weeks and months and years went by ;
And never evil thing the while had power
To enter there. The boy in sun and shower
Rejoicing in his strength to youthhed grew ;
And Mooma, that beloved girl, a dower
Of gentleness from bounteous nature drew,
With all that should the heart of womankind imbue.

9

The tears, which o'er her infancy were shed
Profuse, resented not of grief alone :
Maternal love their bitterness allay'd,
And with a strength and virtue all its own
Sustain'd the breaking heart. A look, a tone,
A gesture of that innocent babe, in eyes
With saddest recollections overflown
Would sometimes make a tender smile arise,
Like sunshine opening thro' a shower in vernal skies.

10

No looks but those of tenderness were found
To turn upon that helpless infant dear ;
And, as her sense unfolded, never sound
Of wrath or discord brake upon her ear.
Her soul its native purity sincere
Possess'd, by no example here defiled ;
From envious passions free, exempt from fear,
Unknowing of all ill, amid the wild
Beloving and beloved she grew, a happy child.

11

Yea, where that solitary bower was placed,
Though all unlike to Paradise the scene,
(A wide circumference of woodland's waste:)
Something of what in Eden might have been
Was shadow'd there imperfectly, I ween,
In this fair creature: safe from all offence,
Expanding like a shelter'd plant serene,
Evils that fret and stain being far from thence,
Her heart in peace and joy retain'd its innocence. 99

12

At first the infant to Yeruti proved
A cause of wonder and disturbing joy.
A stronger tie than that of kindred moved
His inmost being, as the happy boy
Felt in his heart of hearts without alloy
The sense of kind: a fellow creature she,
In whom, when now she ceased to be a toy
For tender sport, his soul rejoiced to see
Connatural powers expand, and growing sympathy.

13

For her he cull'd the fairest flowers, and sought
Throughout the woods the earliest fruits for her. 110
The cayman's eggs, the honeycomb he brought
To this beloved sister, . . whatsoe'er,
To his poor thought, of delicate or rare
The wilds might yield, solicitous to find.
They who affirm all natural acts declare
Self-love to be the ruler of the mind,
Judge from their own mean hearts, and foully wrong mankind.

14

Three souls in whom no selfishness had place
Were here: three happy souls, which, undefiled,
Albeit in darkness, still retain'd a trace 120
Of their celestial origin. The wild
Was as a sanctuary where Nature smiled
Upon these simple children of her own,
And, cherishing whate'er was meek and mild,
Call'd forth the gentle virtues, such alone,
The evils which evoke the stronger being unknown.

15

What though at birth we bring with us the seed
Of sin, a mortal taint, . . in heart and will
Too surely felt, too plainly shown in deed, . .
Our fatal heritage; yet are we still
The children of the All Merciful; and ill 131
They teach, who tell us that from hence must flow
God's wrath, and then his justice to fulfil,
Death everlasting, never-ending woe:
O miserable lot of man if it were so!

16

Falsely and impiously teach they who thus
Our heavenly Father's holy will misread!
In bounty hath the Lord created us,
In love redeem'd. From this authentic creed
Let no bewildering sophistry impede
The heart's entire assent, for God is good. 141
Hold firm this faith, and, in whatever need,
Doubt not but thou wilt find thy soul endued
With all-sufficing strength of heavenly fortitude!

17

By nature peccable and frail are we,
Easily beguiled; to vice, to error prone;
But apt for virtue too. Humanity
Is not a field where tares and thorns alone
Are left to spring; good seed hath there been sown
With no unsparing hand. Sometimes the shoot
Is choked with weeds, or withers on a stone;
But in a kindly soil it strikes its root,
And flourisheth, and bringeth forth abundant fruit.

18

Love, duty, generous feeling, tenderness,
Spring in the uncontaminated mind;
And these were Mooma's natural dower. Nor less
Had liberal Nature to the boy assign'd,
Happier herein than if among mankind
Their lot had fallen, . . oh, certes happier here!
That all things tended still more close to bind
Their earliest ties, and they from year to year
Retain'd a childish heart, fond, simple, and sincere.

19

They had no sad reflection to alloy
The calm contentment of the passing day,
Nor foresight to disturb the present joy.
Not so with Monnema; albeit the sway
Of time had reach'd her heart, and worn away,
At length, the grief so deeply seated there,
The future often, like a burthen, lay
Upon that heart, a cause of secret care
And melancholy thought; yet did she not despair.

20

Chance from the fellowship of human kind
Had cut them off, and chance might reunite.
On this poor possibility her mind
Reposed; she did not for herself invite
The unlikely thought, and cherish with delight
The dream of what such change might haply bring;
Gladness with hope long since had taken flight
From her; she felt that life was on the wing,
And happiness like youth has here no second spring.

21

So were her feelings to her lot composed
That to herself all change had now been pain.
For Time upon her own desires had closed;
But in her children as she lived again,
For their dear sake she learnt to entertain
A wish for human intercourse renew'd;
And oftentimes, while they devour'd the strain,
Would she beguile their evening solitude
With stories strangely told and strangely understood.

22

Little she knew, for little had she seen,
And little of traditionary lore
Had reach'd her ear; and yet to them I ween
Their mother's knowledge seem'd a boundless store.
A world it open'd to their thoughts, yea more, . .
Another world beyond this mortal state.
Bereft of her they had indeed been poor,
Being left to animal sense, degenerate,
Mere creatures, they had sunk below the beasts' estate.

23

The human race, from her they understood,
Was not within that lonely hut confined,
But distant far beyond their world of wood
Were tribes and powerful nations of their kind;
And of the old observances which bind
People and chiefs, the ties of man and wife,
The laws of kin religiously assign'd,
Rites, customs, scenes of riotry and strife,
And all the strange vicissitudes of savage life.

24

Wondering they listen to the wondrous tale,
But no repining thought such tales excite:
Only a wish, if wishes might avail,
Was haply felt, with juvenile delight,
To mingle in the social dance at night,
Where the broad moonshine, level as a flood,
O'erspread the plain, and in the silver light,
Well-pleased, the placid elders sate and view'd
The sport, and seem'd therein to feel their youth renew'd.

25

But when the darker scenes their mother drew,
What crimes were wrought when drunken fury raged,
What miseries from their fatal discord grew,
When horde with horde in deadly strife engaged:
The rancorous hate with which their wars they waged,
The more unnatural horrors which ensued,
When, with inveterate vengeance unassuaged,
The victors round their slaughter'd captives stood,
And babes were brought to dip their little hands in blood:

26

Horrent they heard; and with her hands the Maid
Prest her eyes close as if she strove to blot
The hateful image which her mind portray'd.
The Boy sate silently, intent in thought;
Then with a deep-drawn sigh, as if he sought
To heave the oppressive feeling from his breast,
Complacently compared their harmless lot
With such wild life, outrageous and unblest;
Securely thus to live, he said, was surely best.

27

On tales of blood they could not bear to dwell,
From such their hearts abhorrent shrunk in fear.
Better they liked that Monnema should tell
Of things unseen; what Power had placed them here,
And whence the living spirit came, and where
It pass'd, when parted from this mortal mould;
Of such mysterious themes with willing ear
They heard, devoutly listening while she told
Strangely-disfigured truths, and fables feign'd of old.

28

By the Great Spirit man was made, she said,
His voice it was which peal'd along the sky,
And shook the heavens and fill'd the earth with dread.
Alone and inaccessible, on high
He had his dwelling-place eternally,
And Father was his name. This all knew well;
But none had seen his face: and if his eye
Regarded what upon the earth befell,
Or if he cared for man, she knew not: . . who could tell?

29

But this, she said, was sure, that after death
There was reward and there was punishment:
And that the evil doers, when the breath [spent,
Of their injurious lives at length was
Into all noxious forms abhorr'd were sent, [still
Of beasts and reptiles; so retaining
Their old propensities, on evil bent,
They work'd where'er they might their wicked will,
The natural foes of man, whom we pursue and kill.

30

Of better spirits, some there were who said
That in the grave they had their place of rest.
Lightly they laid the earth upon the dead,
Lest in his narrow tenement the guest
Should suffer underneath such load opprest. [free,
But that death surely set the spirit
Sad proof to them poor Monnema addrest,
Drawn from their father's fate; no grave had he
Wherein his soul might dwell. This therefore could not be.

31

Likelier they taught who said that to the Land
Of Souls the happy spirit took its flight,
A region underneath the sole command
Of the Good Power; by him for the upright
Appointed and replenish'd with delight;
A land where nothing evil ever came,
Sorrow, nor pain, nor peril, nor affright,
Nor change, nor death; but there the human frame,
Untouch'd by age or ill, continued still the same.

32

Winds would not pierce it there, nor heat and cold
Grieve, nor thirst parch and hunger pine; but there
The sun by day its even influence hold
With genial warmth, and through the unclouded air
The moon upon her nightly journey fare:
The lakes and fish-full streams are never dry;
Trees ever green perpetual fruitage bear; [eye,
And, wheresoe'er the hunter turns his
Water and earth and heaven to him their stores supply.

33

And once there was a way to that good land,
For in mid-earth a wondrous Tree there grew,
By which the adventurer might with foot and hand
From branch to branch his upward course pursue; [true,
An easy path, if what were said be
Albeit the ascent was long: and when the height
Was gain'd, that blissful region was in view,
Wherein the traveller safely might alight,
And roam abroad at will, and take his free delight.

34

O happy time, when ingress thus was given
To the upper world, and at their pleasure they
Whose hearts were strong might pass from Earth to Heaven
By their own act and choice! In evil day
Mishap had fatally cut off that way,
And none may now the Land of Spirits gain, [clay
Till from its dear-loved tenement of
Violence or age, infirmity and pain,
Divorce the soul which there full gladly would remain.

35

Such grievous loss had by their own misdeed
Upon the unworthy race of men been brought.
An aged woman once who could not speed
In fishing, earnestly one day besought
Her countrymen, that they of what they caught
A portion would upon her wants bestow.
They set her hunger and her age at nought,
And still to her entreaties answered no!
And mock'd her, till they made her heart with rage o'erflow.

36

But that Old Woman by such wanton wrong
Inflamed, went hurrying down; and in the pride
Of magic power, wherein the crone was strong,
Her human form infirm she laid aside.
Better the Capiguara's limbs supplied
A strength accordant to her fierce intent:
These she assumed, and, burrowing deep and wide
Beneath the Tree, with vicious will, she went,
To inflict upon mankind a lasting punishment.

37

Downward she wrought her way, and all around
Labouring, the solid earth she undermined
And loosen'd all the roots; then from the ground
Emerging, in her hatred of her kind,
Resumed her proper form, and breathed a wind
Which gather'd like a tempest round its head:
Eftsoon the lofty Tree its top inclined
Uptorn with horrible convulsion dread,
And over half the world its mighty wreck lay spread.

38

But never scion sprouted from that Tree,
Nor seed sprang up; and thus the easy way,
Which had till then for young and old been free,
Was closed upon the sons of men for aye.
The mighty ruin moulder'd where it lay
Till not a trace was left; and now in sooth
Almost had all remembrance pass'd away.
This from the Elders she had heard in youth;
Some said it was a tale, and some a very truth.

39

Nathless departed spirits at their will
Could from the Land of Souls pass to and fro; [still,
They come to us in sleep when all is
Sometimes to warn against the impending blow,
Alas! more oft to visit us in woe:
Though in their presence there was poor relief!
And this had sad experience made her know,
For when Quiara came, his stay was brief,
And, waking then, she felt a freshen'd sense of grief.

40

Yet to behold his face again, and hear
His voice, though painful, was a deep delight:
It was a joy to think that he was near,
To see him in the visions of the night, . .
To know that the departed still requite
The love which to their memory still will cling:
And, though he might not bless her waking sight
With his dear presence,' twas a blessed thing
That sleep would thus sometimes his actual image bring.

41

Why comes he not to me? Yeruti cries:
And Mooma, echoing with a sigh the thought, [eyes
Ask'd why it was that to her longing
No dream the image of her father brought?
Nor Monnema to solve that question sought
In vain, content in ignorance to dwell;
Perhaps it was because they knew him not;
Perhaps . . but sooth she could not answer well;
What the departed did, themselves alone could tell.

42

What one tribe held another disbelieved,
For all concerning this was dark, she said;
Uncertain all, and hard to be received.
The dreadful race, from whom their fathers fled,
Boasted that even the Country of the Dead
Was theirs, and where their Spirits chose to go,
The ghosts of other men retired in dread
Before the face of that victorious foe;
No better, then, the world above, than this below!

43

What then, alas! if this were true, was death?
Only a mournful change from ill to ill!
And some there were who said the living breath
Would ne'er be taken from us by the will
Of the Good Father, but continue still
To feed with life the mortal frame he gave,
Did not mischance or wicked witchcraft kill; . .
Evils from which no care avail'd to save,
And whereby all were sent to fill the greedy grave.

44

In vain to counterwork the baleful charm
By spells of rival witchcraft was it sought,
Less potent was that art to help than harm.
No means of safety old experience brought:
Nor better fortune did they find who thought
From Death, as from some living foe, to fly:
For speed or subterfuge avail'd them nought,
But wheresoe'er they fled they found him nigh: [enemy.
None ever could elude that unseen

45

Bootless the boast, and vain the proud intent
Of those who hoped, with arrogant display
Of arms and force, to scare him from their tent,
As if their threatful shouts and fierce array
Of war could drive the Invisible away!
Sometimes, regardless of the sufferer's groan,
They dragg'd the dying out, and as prey
Exposed him, that content with him alone
Death might depart, and thus his fate avert their own.

46

Depart he might, . . but only to return
In quest of other victims, soon or late;
When they who held this fond belief would learn,
Each by his own inevitable fate,
That in the course of man's uncertain state
Death is the one and only certain thing.
Oh folly then to fly or deprecate
That which at last Time, ever on the wing,
Certain as day and night, to weary age must bring!

47

While thus the Matron spake, the youthful twain
Listen'd in deep attention, wistfully;
Whether with more of wonder or of pain [eye
Uneath it were to tell. With steady
Intent they heard; and, when she paused, a sigh
Their sorrowful foreboding seem'd to speak:
Questions to which she could not give reply
Yeruti ask'd; and for that Maiden meek, . . [cheek.
Involuntary tears ran down her quiet

48

A different sentiment within them stirr'd, [day,
When Monnema recall'd to mind one
Imperfectly, what she had sometimes heard
In childhood, long ago, the Elders say:
Almost from memory had it pass'd away, . .
How there appear'd amid the woodlands men
Whom the Great Spirit sent there to convey
His gracious will; but little heed she then
Had given, and like a dream it now recurr'd again.

49

But these young questioners from time to time
Call'd up the long-forgotten theme anew.
Strange men they were, from some remotest clime,
She said, of different speech, uncouth to view,
Having hair upon their face, and white in hue;
Across the World of waters wide they came
Devotedly the Father's work to do,
And seek the Red-Men out, and in his name
His merciful laws, and love, and promises proclaim.

50

They served a Maid more beautiful than tongue
Could tell, or heart conceive. Of human race,
All heavenly as that Virgin was, she sprung;
But for her beauty and celestial grace,
Being one in whose pure elements no trace
Hade'er inhered of sin or mortal stain,
The highest Heaven was now her dwelling-place;
There as a Queen divine she held her reign,
And there in endless joy for ever would remain.

51

Her feet upon the crescent Moon were set,
And, moving in their order round her head,
The Stars compose her sparkling coronet.
There at her breast the Virgin Mother fed
A Babe divine, who was to judge the dead,
Such power the Spirit gave this aweful Child;
Severe he was, and in his anger dread,
Yet alway at his Mother's will grew mild,
So well did he obey that Maiden undefiled.

52

Sometimes she had descended from above
To visit her true votaries, and requite
Such as had served her well. And for her love,
These bearded men, forsaking all delight,
With labour long and dangers infinite,
Across the great blue waters came, and sought
The Red-Men here, to win them, if they might, [aught,
From bloody ways, rejoiced to profit
Even when with their own lives the benefit was bought.

53

For, trusting in this heavenly Maiden's grace,
It was for them a joyful thing to die,
As men who went to have their happy place
With her, and with that Holy Child, on high,
In fields of bliss above the starry sky,
In glory at the Virgin Mother's feet:
And all who kept their lessons faithfully
An everlasting guerdon there would meet,
When Death had led their souls to that celestial seat.

54

On earth they offer'd, too, an easy life
To those who their mild lessons would obey,
Exempt from want, from danger, and from strife;
And from the forest leading them away,
They placed them underneath this Virgin's sway,
A numerous fellowship, in peace to dwell;
Their high and happy office there to pay
Devotions due, which she requited well,
Their heavenly Guardian she in whatsoe'er befell.

55

Thus, Monnema remember'd, it was told
By one who in his hot and headstrong youth
Had left her happy service; but when old
Lamented oft with unavailing ruth,
And thoughts which sharper than a serpent's tooth
Pierced him, that he had changed that peaceful place
For the fierce freedom and the ways uncouth [grace,
Of their wild life, and lost that Lady's
Wherefore he had no hope to see in Heaven her face.

56

And she remember'd, too, when first they fled
For safety to the farthest solitude
Before their cruel foes, and lived in dread
That thither too their steps might be pursued
By those old enemies athirst for blood;
How some among them hoped to see the day
When these beloved messengers of good
To that lone hiding-place might find the way,
And them to their abode of blessedness convey.

57

Such tales excited in Yeruti's heart
A stirring hope that haply he might meet
Some minister of Heaven; and many a part
Untrod before of that wild wood retreat
Did he with indefatigable feet
Explore; yet ever from the fruitless quest
Return'd at evening to his native seat
By daily disappointment undeprest, . .
So buoyant was the hope that fill'd his youthful breast.

58

At length the hour approach'd that should fulfil
His harmless heart's desire, when they shall see
Their fellow-kind, and take for good or ill
The fearful chance, for such it needs must be,
Of change from that entire simplicity.
Yet wherefore should the thought of change appal?
Grief it perhaps might bring, and injury,
And death; . . but evil never can befall
The virtuous, for the Eye of Heaven is over all.

CANTO III

1

Amid those marshy woodlands far and wide
Which spread beyond the soaring vulture's eye,
There grew on Empalado's southern side [supply
Groves of that tree whose leaves adust
The Spaniards with their daily luxury;
A beverage whose salubrious use obtains
Through many a land of mines and slavery, [plains,
Even over all La Plata's sea-like
And Chili's mountain realm, and proud Peru's domains.

2

But better for the injured Indian race
Had woods of manchineel the land o'erspread:
Yea, in that tree so blest by Nature's grace
A direr curse had they inherited,
Than if the Upas there had rear'd its head
And sent its baleful scions all around,
Blasting where'er its effluent force was shed, [ground,
In air and water, and the infected
All things wherein the breath or sap of life is found.

3

The poor Guaranies dreamt of no such ill,
When for themselves in miserable hour,
The virtues of that leaf, with pure good will,
They taught their unsuspected visitor,
New in the land as yet. They learnt his power
Too soon, which law nor conscience could restrain,
A fearless but inhuman conqueror,
Heart-harden'd by the accursed lust of gain.
O fatal thirst of gold! O foul reproach for Spain!

4

For gold and silver had the Spaniards sought,
Exploring Paraguay with desperate pains,
Their way through forests axe in hand they wrought;
Drench'd from above by unremitting rains
They waded over inundated plains,
Forward by hope of plunder still allured;
So they might one day count their golden gains,
They cared not at what cost of sin procured,
All dangers they defied, all sufferings they endured.

5

Barren alike of glory and of gold
That region proved to them; nor would the soil
Unto their unindustrious hands unfold
Harvests, the fruit of peace, . . and wine and oil,
The treasures that repay contented toil
With health and weal; treasures that with them bring
No guilt for priest and penance to assoil,
Nor with their venom arm the awaken'd sting
Of conscience at that hour when life is vanishing.

6

But keen of eye in their pursuit of gain
The conquerors look'd for lucre in this tree: [attain,
An annual harvest there might they
Without the cost of annual industry.
'Twas but to gather in what there grew free
And share Potosi's wealth. Nor thence alone.
But gold in glad exchange they soon should see
From all that once the Incas called their own,
Or where the Zippa's power or Zaque's laws were known.

7

For this, in fact, though not in name a slave,
The Indian from his family was torn ;
And droves on droves were sent to find a grave
In woods and swamps, by toil severe outworn,
No friend at hand to succour or to mourn,
In death unpitied, as in life unblest.
O miserable race, to slavery born !
Yet, when we look beyond this world's unrest,
More miserable then the oppressors than the opprest.

8

Often had Kings essay'd to check the ill [meant ;
By edicts not so well enforced as
A present power was wanting to fulfil
Remote authority's sincere intent.
To Avarice, on its present purpose bent,
The voice of distant Justice spake in vain ;
False magistrates and priests their influence lent
The accursed thing for lucre to maintain :
O fatal thirst of gold ! O foul reproach for Spain !

9

O foul reproach ! but not for Spain alone,
But for all lands that bear the Christian name !
Where'er commercial slavery is known,
O shall not Justice trumpet-tongued proclaim
The foul reproach, the black offence the same ?
Hear, guilty France ! and thou, O England, hear !
Thou who hast half redeem'd thyself from shame,
When slavery from thy realms shall disappear,
Then from this guilt, and not till then, wilt thou be clear.

10

Uncheck'd in Paraguay it ran its course,
Till all the gentler children of the land
Well nigh had been consumed without remorse.
The bolder tribes meantime, whose skilful hand
Had tamed the horse, in many a warlike band
Kept the field well with bow and dreadful spear.
And now the Spaniards dared no more withstand
Their force, but in their towns grew pale with fear
If the Mocobio, or the Abipon drew near.

11

Bear witness, Chaco, thou, from thy domain
With Spanish blood, as erst with Indian, fed !
And Corrientes, by whose church the slain
Were piled in heaps, till for the gather'd dead
One common grave was dug, one service said !
Thou too, Parana, thy sad witness bear
From shores with many a mournful vestige spread,
And monumental crosses here and there,
And monumental names that tell where dwellings were !

12

Nor would with all their power the Kings of Spain,
Austrian or Bourbon, have at last avail'd
This torrent of destruction to restrain,
And save a people every where assail'd
By men before whose face their courage quail'd,
But for the virtuous agency of those
Who with the Cross alone, when arms had fail'd,
Achieved a peaceful triumph o'er the foes,
And gave that weary land the blessings of repose.

13

For whensoe'er the Spaniards felt or fear'd
An Indian enemy, they call'd for aid
Upon Loyola's sons, now long endear'd
To many a happy tribe, by them convey'd
From the open wilderness or woodland shade,
In towns of happiest polity to dwell.
Freely these faithful ministers essay'd
The arduous enterprize, contented well
If with success they sped, or if as martyrs fell.

14

And now it chanced some traders who had fell'd
The trees of precious foliage far and wide
On Empalado's shore, when they beheld
The inviting woodlands on its northern side,
Crost thither in their quest, and there espied
Yeruti's footsteps: searching then the shade
At length a lonely dwelling they descried,
And at the thought of hostile hordes dismay'd
To the nearest mission sped and ask'd the Jesuit's aid.

15

That was a call which ne'er was made in vain
Upon Loyola's sons. In Paraguay
Much of injustice had they to complain,
Much of neglect; but faithful labourers they
In the Lord's vineyard, there was no delay
When summon'd to his work. A little band
Of converts made them ready for the way; [hand
Their spiritual father took a Cross in
To be his staff, and forth they went to search the land.

16

He was a man of rarest qualities,
Who to this barbarous region had confined
A spirit with the learned and the wise
Worthy to take its place, and from mankind
Receive their homage, to the immortal mind
Paid in its just inheritance of fame.
But he to humbler thoughts his heart inclined;
From Gratz amid the Styrian hills he came,
And Dobrizhoffer was the good man's honour'd name.

17

It was his evil fortune to behold
The labours of his painful life destroy'd;
His flock which he had brought within the fold
Dispersed; the work of ages render'd void,
And all of good that Paraguay enjoy'd
By blind and suicidal Power o'erthrown.
So he the years of his old age employ'd,
A faithful chronicler, in handing down
Names which he loved, and things well worthy to be known.

18

And thus, when exiled from the dear-loved scene,
In proud Vienna he beguiled the pain
Of sad remembrance; and the Empress Queen,
That great Teresa, she did not disdain
In gracious mood sometimes to entertain
Discourse with him both pleasurable and sage;
And sure a willing ear she well might deign
To one whose tales may equally engage
The wondering mind of youth, the thoughtful heart of age.

19

But of his native speech because well nigh
Disuse in him forgetfulness had wrought,
In Latin he composed his history;
A garrulous, but a lively tale, and fraught
With matter of delight and food for thought.
And, if he could in Merlin's glass have seen
By whom his tomes to speak our tongue were taught,
The old man would have felt as pleased, I ween,
As when he won the ear of that great Empress Queen.

20

Little he deem'd, when with his Indian band
He through the wilds set forth upon his way,
A Poet then unborn, and in a land
Which had proscribed his order, should one day
Take up from thence his moralizing lay,
And shape a song that, with no fiction drest,
Should to his worth its grateful tribute pay,
And, sinking deep in many an English breast,
Foster that faith divine that keeps the heart at rest.

21

Behold him on his way! the breviary
Which from his girdle hangs, his only shield;
That well-known habit is his panoply,
That Cross, the only weapon he will wield;
By day he bears it for his staff afield,
By night it is the pillar of his bed;
No other lodging these wild woods can yield
Than earth's hard lap, and rustling overhead
A canopy of deep and tangled boughs far spread.

22

Yet may they not without some cautious care
Take up their inn content upon the ground.
First it behoves to clear a circle there,
And trample down the grass and plantage round,
Where many a deadly reptile might be found, [heat
Whom with its bright and comfortable
The flame would else allure: such plagues abound
In these thick woods, and therefore must they beat
The earth, and trample well the herbs beneath their feet.

23

And now they heap dry reeds and broken wood;
The spark is struck, the crackling faggots blaze,
And cheer that unaccustom'd solitude.
Soon have they made their frugal meal of maize;
In grateful adoration then they raise
The evening hymn. How solemn in the wild
That sweet accordant strain wherewith they praise
The Queen of Angels, merciful and mild:
Hail, holiest Mary! Maid, and Mother undefiled.

24

Blame as thou may'st the Papist's erring creed,
But not their salutary rite of even!
The prayers that from a pious soul proceed,
Though misdirected, reach the ear of Heaven.
Us, unto whom a purer faith is given,
As our best birthright it behoves to hold
The precious charge; but, oh, beware the leaven
Which makes the heart of charity grow cold!
We own one Shepherd, we shall be at last one fold.

25

Thinkest thou the little company who here
Pour forth their hymn devout at close of day,
Feel it no aid that those who hold them dear
At the same hour the self-same homage pay,
Commending them to Heaven when far away ?
That the sweet bells are heard in solemn chime
Through all the happy towns of Paraguay,
Where now their brethren in one point of time
Join in the general prayer, with sympathy sublime ?

26

That to the glorious Mother of their Lord
Whole Christendom that hour its homage pays ?
From court and cottage that with one accord
Ascends the universal strain of praise?
Amid the crowded city's restless ways,
One reverential thought pervades the throng ;
The traveller on his lonely road obeys
The sacred hour, and, as he fares along,
In spirit hears and joins his household's even-song.

27

What if they think that every prayer enroll'd
Shall one day in their good account appear ;
That guardian Angels hover round and fold [hear ;
Their wings in adoration while they
Ministrant Spirits through the ethereal sphere
Waft it with joy, and to the grateful theme,
Well pleased, the Mighty Mother bends her ear ?
A vain delusion this we rightly deem :
Yet what they feel is not a mere illusive dream.

28

That prayer perform'd, around the fire reclined
Beneath the leafy canopy they lay
Their limbs : the Indians soon to sleep resign'd ;
And the good Father with that toilsome day
Fatigued, full fain to sleep, . . if sleep he may,
Whom all tormenting insects there assail ;
More to be dreaded these than beasts of prey
Against whom strength may cope, or skill prevail,
But art of man against these enemies must fail.

29

Patience itself that should the sovereign cure,
For ills that touch ourselves alone, supply,
Lends little aid to one who must endure
This plague : the small tormentors fill the sky,
And swarm about their prey ; there he must lie
And suffer while the hours of darkness wear ; [sigh
At times he utters with a deep-drawn
Some name adored, in accents of despair
Breath'd sorrowfully forth, half murmur and half prayer.

30

Welcome to him the earliest gleam of light ;
Welcome to him the earliest sound of day ;
That from the sufferings of that weary night [way,
Released, he may resume his willing
Well pleased again the perils to essay
Of that drear wilderness, with hope renew'd :
Success will all his labours overpay,
A quest like his is cheerfully pursued,
The heart is happy still that is intent on good.

31

And now where Empalado's waters creep
Through low and level shores of woodland wide,
They come; prepared to cross the sluggish deep,
An ill-shaped coracle of hardest hide,
Ruder than ever Cambrian fisher plied
Where Towey and the salt-sea waters meet,
The Indians launch; they steady it and guide,
Winning their way with arms and practised feet,
While in the tottering boat the Father keeps his seat.

32

For three long summer days on every side
They search in vain the sylvan solitude;
The fourth a human footstep is espied,
And through the mazes of the pathless wood
With hound-like skill and hawk-like eye pursued; [they
For keen upon their pious quest are
As e'er were hunters on the track of blood. [betray
Where softer ground or trodden herbs
The slightest mark of man, they there explore the way.

33

More cautious, when more certain of the trace,
In silence they proceed; not like a crew
Of jovial hunters, who the joyous chase
With hound and horn in open field pursue,
Cheering their way with jubilant halloo,
And hurrying forward to their spoil desired,
The panting game before them, full in view:
Humaner thoughts this little band inspired,
Yet with a hope as high their gentle hearts were fired.

34

Nor is their virtuous hope devoid of fear;
The perils of that enterprise they know;
Some savage horde may have its fastness here,
A race to whom a stranger is a foe,
Who not for friendly words, nor proffer'd show
Of gifts, will peace or parley entertain.
If by such hands their blameless blood should flow
To serve the Lamb who for their sins was slain,
Blessed indeed their lot, for so to die is gain!

35

Them, thus pursuing where the track may lead,
A human voice arrests upon their way;
They stop, and thither, whence the sounds proceed,
All eyes are turn'd in wonder, . . not dismay,
For sure such sounds might charm all fear away;
No nightingale whose brooding mate is nigh,
From some sequester'd bower at close of day,
No lark rejoicing in the orient sky,
Ever pour'd forth so wild a strain of melody.

36

The voice which through the ringing forest floats
Is one which, having ne'er been taught the skill
Of marshalling sweet words to sweeter notes,
Utters all unpremeditate, at will,
A modulated sequence loud and shrill
Of inarticulate and long-breathed sound,
Varying its tones with rise and fall and trill,
Till all the solitary woods around
With that far-piercing power of melody resound.

37

In mute astonishment attent to hear,
As if by some enchantment held, they stood,
With bending head, fix'd eye, and eager ear,
And hand upraised in warning attitude
To check all speech or step that might intrude
On that sweet strain. Them leaving thus spell-bound,
A little way alone into the wood
The Father gently moved toward the sound,
Treading with quiet feet upon the grassy ground.

38

Anon advancing thus the trees between,
He saw beside her bower the songstress wild,
Not distant far, himself the while unseen.
Mooma it was, that happy maiden mild,
Who in the sunshine, like a careless child
Of nature, in her joy was caroling.
A heavier heart than his it had beguiled
So to have heard so fair a creature sing
The strains which she had learnt from all sweet birds of spring.

39

For these had been her teachers, these alone;
And she in many an emulous essay,
At length into a descant of her own
Had blended all their notes, a wild display
Of sounds in rich irregular array;
And now, as blithe as bird in vernal bower,
Pour'd in full flow the unexpressive lay,
Rejoicing in her consciousness of power,
But in the inborn sense of harmony yet more.

40

In joy had she begun the ambitious song,
With rapid interchange of sink and swell;
And sometimes high the note was raised, and long
Produced, with shake and effort sensible,
As if the voice exulted there to dwell;
But when she could no more that pitch sustain,
So thrillingly attuned the cadence fell,
That with the music of its dying strain
She moved herself to tears of pleasurable pain.

41

It might be deem'd some dim presage possess'd
The virgin's soul; that some mysterious sense
Of change to come, upon her mind impress'd,
Had then call'd forth, ere she departed thence,
A requiem to their days of innocence.
For what thou losest in thy native shade
There is one change alone that may compense,
O Mooma, innocent and simple maid,
Only one change, and it will not be long delay'd!

42

When now the Father issued from the wood
Into that little glade in open sight,
Like one entranced, beholding him, she stood;
Yet had she more of wonder than affright,
Yet less of wonder than of dread delight,
When thus the actual vision came in view;
For instantly the maiden read aright
Wherefore he came; his garb and beard she knew;
All that her mother heard had then indeed been true.

43

Nor was the Father filled with less surprise;
He too strange fancies well might entertain,
When this so fair a creature met his eyes.
He might have thought her not of mortal strain;
Rather, as bards of yore were wont to feign,
A nymph divine of Mondai's secret stream;
Or haply of Diana's woodland train:
For in her beauty Mooma such might seem,
Being less a child of earth than like a poet's dream.

44

No art of barbarous ornament had scarr'd
And stain'd her virgin limbs, or 'filed her face;
Nor ever yet had evil passion marr'd
In her sweet countenance the natural grace
Of innocence and youth; nor was there trace
Of sorrow, or of hardening want and care.
Strange was it in this wild and savage place,
Which seem'd to be for beasts a fitting lair,
Thus to behold a maid so gentle and so fair.

45

Across her shoulders was a hammock flung,
By night it was the maiden's bed, by day
Her only garment. Round her as it hung,
In short unequal folds of loose array,
The open meshes, when she moves, display
Her form. She stood with fix'd and wondering eyes,
And, trembling like a leaf upon the spray,
Even for excess of joy, with eager cries
She call'd her mother forth to share that glad surprise.

46

At that unwonted call with quicken'd pace
The matron hurried thither, half in fear.
How strange to Monnema a stranger's face!
How strange it was a stranger's voice to hear,
How strangely to her disaccustom'd ear
Came even the accents of her native tongue!
But when she saw her countrymen appear,
Tears for that unexpected blessing sprung,
And once again she felt as if her heart were young.

47

Soon was her melancholy story told,
And glad consent unto that Father good
Was given, that they to join his happy fold
Would leave with him their forest solitude.
Why comes not now Yeruti from the wood?
Why tarrieth he so late this blessed day?
They long to see their joy in his renew'd,
And look impatiently toward his way,
And think they hear his step, and chide his long delay.

48

He comes at length, a happy man, to find
His only dream of hope fulfill'd at last.
The sunshine of his all-believing mind
There is no doubt or fear to overcast;
No chilling forethought checks his bliss; the past
Leaves no regret for him, and all to come
Is change and wonder and delight. How fast
Hath busy fancy conjured up a sum
Of joys unknown, whereof the expectance makes him dumb.

49

O happy day, the Messenger of Heaven
Hath found them in their lonely dwelling-place!
O happy day, to them it would be given
To share in that Eternal Mother's grace,
And one day see in heaven her glorious face, [adore!
Where Angels round her mercy-throne
Now shall they mingle with the human race,
Sequester'd from their fellow-kind no more;
O joy of joys supreme! O bliss for them in store!

50

Full of such hopes this night they lay them down,
But not as they were wont, this night to rest.
Their old tranquillity of heart is gone;
The peace wherewith till now they have been blest
Hath taken its departure. In the breast
Fast following thoughts and busy fancies throng;
Their sleep itself is feverish, and possest [belong;
With dreams that to the wakeful mind
To Mooma and the youth then first the night seem'd long.

51

Day comes, and now a first and last farewell
To that fair bower within their native wood,
Their quiet nest till now. The bird may dwell
Henceforth in safety there, and rear her brood,
And beasts and reptiles undisturb'd intrude; [go,
Reckless of this, the simple tenants
Emerging from their peaceful solitude,
To mingle with the world, . . but not to know
Its crimes, nor to partake its cares, nor feel its woe.

CANTO IV

1

The bells rung blithely from St. Mary's tower,
When in St. Joachin's the news was told [hour
That Dobrizhoffer from his quest that
Drew nigh: the glad Guaranies young and old
Throng through the gate, rejoicing to behold [glee
His face again; and all with heartfelt
Welcome the Pastor to his peaceful fold, [he,
Where so beloved amid his flock was
That this return was like a day of jubilee.

2

How more than strange, how marvellous a sight
To the newcomers was this multitude!
Something like fear was mingled with affright [view'd;
When they the busy scene of turmoil
Wonder itself the sense of joy subdued, [oppress
And with its all-unwonted weight
These children of the quiet solitude;
And now and then a sigh that heaved the breast
Unconsciously bewray'd their feeling of unrest.

3

Not more prodigious than that little town
Seem'd to these comers, were the pomp and power
To us, of ancient Rome in her renown;
Nor the elder Babylon, or ere that hour
When her high gardens, and her cloud-capt tower,
And her broad walls before the Persian fell;
Nor those dread fanes on Nile's forsaken shore
Whose ruins yet their pristine grandeur tell,
Wherein the demon Gods themselves might deign to dwell.

4

But if, all humble as it was, that scene
Possess'd a poor and uninstructed mind
With awe, the thoughtful spirit, well I ween,
Something to move its wonder there might find,
Something of consolation for its kind,
Some hope and earnest of a happier age,
When vain pursuits no more the heart shall blind,
But Faith the evils of this earth assuage,
And to all souls assure their heavenly heritage.

5

Yes; for in history's mournful map the eye
On Paraguay, as on a sunny spot,
May rest complacent: to humanity,
There, and there only, hath a peaceful lot
Been granted, by Ambition troubled not,
By Avarice undebased, exempt from care,
By perilous passions undisturb'd. And what
If Glory never rear'd her standard there,
Nor with her clarion's blast awoke the slumbering air?

6

Content and cheerful Piety were found
Within those humble walls. From youth to age
The simple dwellers paced their even round
Of duty, not desiring to engage
Upon the busy world's contentious stage,
Whose ways they wisely had been train'd to dread:
Their inoffensive lives in pupilage
Perpetually, but peacefully they led,
From all temptation saved, and sure of daily bread.

7

They on the Jesuit, who was nothing loth,
Reposed alike their conscience and their cares: [both
And he, with equal faith, the trust of
Accepted and discharged. The bliss is theirs [pares
Of that entire dependence that pre-
Entire submission, let what may befall;
And his whole careful course of life declares
That for their good he holds them thus in thrall,
Their Father and their Friend, Priest, Ruler, all in all.

8

Food, raiment, shelter, safety, he provides;
No forecast, no anxieties have they;
The Jesuit governs, and instructs and guides;
Their part it is to honour and obey,
Like children under wise parental sway.
All thoughts and wishes are to him confess'd;
And, when at length in life's last weary day
In sure and certain hope they sink to rest,
By him their eyes are closed, by him their burial blest.

9

Deem not their lives of happiness devoid,
Though thus the years their course obscurely fill,
In rural and in household arts employ'd, [skill;
And many a pleasing task of pliant
For emulation here unmix'd with ill
Sufficient scope was given. Each had assign'd
His proper part, which yet left free the will:
So well they knew to mould the ductile mind
By whom the scheme of that wise order was combined.

10

It was a land of priestcraft, but the Priest
Believed himself the fables that he taught:
Corrupt their forms, and yet those forms at least
Preserved a salutary faith that wrought,
Maugre the alloy, the saving end it sought. [there,
Benevolence had gain'd such empire
That even superstition had been brought
An aspect of humanity to wear,
And make the weal of man its first and only care.

11

Nor lack'd they store of innocent delight,
Music and song and dance and proud array,
Whate'er might win the ear, or charm the sight; [play
Banners and pageantry in rich dis-
Brought forth upon some Saint's high holyday,
The altar drest, the church with garlands hung, [way,
Arches and floral bowers beside the
And festal tables spread for old and young,
Gladness in every heart, and mirth on every tongue.

12

Thou who despisest so debased a fate,
As in the pride of wisdom thou may'st call
These meek submissive Indians' low estate,
Look round the world, and see where over all
Injurious passions hold mankind in thrall,
How barbarous Force asserts a ruthless reign, [ball,
Or Mammon, o'er his portion of the
Hath learn'd a baser empire to maintain,
Mammon, the god of all who give their souls to gain.

13

Behold the fraudful arts, the covert strife,
The jarring interests that engross mankind;
The low pursuits, the selfish aims of life;
Studies that weary and contract the mind,
That bring no joy, and leave no peace behind;
And Death approaching to dissolve the spell!
The immortal soul, which hath so long been blind,
Recovers then clear sight, and sees too well
The error of its ways, when irretrievable.

14

Far happier the Guaranies' humble race, [wise,
With whom, in dutiful contentment
The gentle virtues had their dwelling-place.
With them the dear domestic charities
Sustain'd no blight from fortune; natural ties
There suffer'd no divorcement, save alone [arise;
That which in course of nature might
No artificial wants and ills were known;
But there they dwelt as if the world were all their own.

15

Obedience in its laws that takes delight
Was theirs; simplicity that knows no art:
Love, friendship, grateful duty in its height;
Meekness and truth, that keep all strife apart,
And faith and hope which elevate the heart
Upon its heavenly heritage intent.
Poor, erring, self-tormentor that thou art, [bent,
O Man! and on thine own undoing
Wherewith canst thou be blest, if not with these content?

16

Mild pupils in submission's perfect school,
Two thousand souls were gather'd here, and here
Beneath the Jesuit's all-embracing rule
They dwelt, obeying him with love sincere,
That never knew distrust, nor felt a fear,
Nor anxious thought which wears the heart away.
Sacred to them their laws, their Ruler dear;
Humbler or happier none could be than they
Who knew it for their good in all things to obey.

17

The Patron Saint, from whom their town was named,
Was that St. Joachin, who, legends say,
Unto the Saints in Limbo first proclaim'd
The Advent. Being permitted, on the day
That Death enlarged him from this mortal clay,
His daughter's high election to behold,
Thither his soul, glad herald, wing'd its way,
And to the Prophets and the Patriarchs old
The tidings of great joy and near deliverance told.

18

There on the altar was his image set,
The lamp before it burning night and day,
And there was incensed, when his votaries met
Before the sacred shrine, their beads to say,
And for his fancied intercession pray,
Devoutly as in faith they bent the knee.
Such adoration they were taught to pay;
Good man, how little had he ween'd that he
Should thus obtain a place in Rome's idolatry!

19

But chiefly there the Mother of our Lord,
His blessed daughter, by the multitude
Was for their special patroness adored.
Amid the square on high her image stood,
Clasping the Babe in her beatitude,
The Babe Divine on whom she fix'd her sight;
And in their hearts, albe the work was rude,
It rais'd the thought of all-commanding might,
Combin'd with boundless love and mercy infinite.

20

To this great family the Jesuit brought
His new-found children now; for young and old
He deem'd alike his children, while he wrought
For their salvation, . . seeking to unfold
The saving mysteries in the creed enroll'd,
To their slow minds, that could but ill conceive
The import of the mighty truths he told.
But errors they have none to which they cleave,
And whatsoe'er he tells they willingly believe.

21

Safe from that pride of ignorance were they
That with small knowledge thinks itself full wise.
How at believing aught should these delay,
When every where new objects met their eyes
To fill the soul with wonder and surprise?
Not of itself, but by temptation bred,
In man doth impious unbelief arise;
It is our instinct to believe and dread,
God bids us love, and then our faith is perfected.

22

Quick to believe, and slow to comprehend,
Like children, unto all the teacher taught
Submissively an easy ear they lend:
And to the font at once he might have brought
These converts, if the Father had not thought
Theirs was a case for wise and safe delay,
Lest lightly learnt might lightly be forgot;
And meanwhile due instruction day by day
Would to their opening minds the sense of truth convey.

23

Of this they reck'd not whether soon or late;
For overpowering wonderment possest
Their faculties; and in this new estate
Strange sights and sounds and thoughts well nigh opprest
Their sense, and raised a turmoil in the breast
Resenting less of pleasure than of pain;
And sleep afforded them no natural rest, [train,
But in their dreams, a mix'd disorder'd
The busy scenes of day disturb'd their hearts again.

24

Even when the spirit to that secret wood
Return'd, slow Mondai's silent stream beside,
No longer there it found the solitude
Which late it left: strange faces were descried,
Voices, and sounds of music far and wide,
And buildings seem'd to tower amid the trees,
And forms of men and beasts on every side,
As ever wakeful fancy hears and sees,
All things that it had heard, and seen, and more than these.

25

For in their sleep strange forms deform'd they saw
Of frightful fiends, their ghostly enemies,
And souls who must abide the rigorous law
Weltering in fire, and there with dolorous cries
Blaspheming roll around their hopeless eyes;
And those who, doom'd a shorter term to bear
In penal flames, look upward to the skies,
Seeking and finding consolation there,
And feel, like dew from heaven, the precious aid of prayer.

26

And Angels who around their glorious Queen
In adoration bent their heads abased;
And infant faces in their dreams were seen
Hovering on cherub-wings; and Spirits placed
To be their guards invisible, who chased
With fiery arms their fiendish foes away:
Such visions overheated fancy traced,
Peopling the night with a confused array
That made its hours of rest more restless than the day.

27

To all who from an old erratic course
Of life, within the Jesuit's fold were led,
The change was perilous. They felt the force
Of habit, when, till then in forests bred,
A thick perpetual umbrage overhead,
They came to dwell in open light and air.
This ill the Fathers long had learnt to dread,
And still devised such means as might prepare
The new-reclaim'd unhurt this total change to bear.

28

All thoughts and occupations to commute,
To change their air, their water, and their food,
And those old habits suddenly uproot,
Conform'd to which the vital powers pursued
Their functions, such mutation is too rude
For man's fine frame unshaken to sustain.
And these poor children of the solitude
Began ere long to pay the bitter pain
That their new way of life brought with it in its train.

29

On Monnema the apprehended ill
Came first; the matron sunk beneath the weight
Of a strong malady, whose force no skill
In healing might avert, or mitigate.
Yet, happy in her children's safe estate,
Her thankfulness for them she still exprest;
And, yielding then complacently to fate,
With Christian rites her passing hour was blest,
And with a Christian's hope she was consign'd to rest.

30

They laid her in the Garden of the Dead;
Such as a Christian burial-place should be
Was that fair spot, where every grave was spread
With flowers, and not a weed to spring was free;
But the pure blossoms of the orange tree
Dropt like a shower of fragrance on the bier;
And palms, the type of immortality,
Planted in stately colonnades appear,
That all was verdant there throughout the unvarying year.

31

Nor ever did irreverent feet intrude
Within that sacred spot: nor sound of mirth,
Unseemly there, profane the solitude,
Where solemnly committed earth to earth,
Waiting the summons for their second birth,
Whole generations in Death's peaceful fold
Collected lay; green innocence, ripe worth,
Youth full of hope, and age whose days were told,
Compress'd alike into that mass of mortal mould.

32

Mortal, and yet at the Archangel's voice
To put on immortality. That call
Shall one day make the sentient dust rejoice;
These bodies then shall rise and cast off all
Corruption, with whate'er of earthy thrall
Had clogg'd the heavenly image, then set free.
How then should Death a Christian's heart appal?
Lo, Heaven for you is open; . . enter ye
Children of God, and heirs of his eternity!

33

This hope supported Mooma, hand in hand
When with Yeruti at the grave she stood.
Less even now of death they understand
Than of the joys eternal that ensued;
The bliss of infinite beatitude
To them had been their teacher's favourite theme,
Wherewith their hearts so fully were imbued,
That it the sole reality might seem,
Life, death, and all things else, a shadow or a dream.

34

Yea, so possest with that best hope were they,
That, if the heavens had open'd overhead,
And the Archangel with his trump that day
To judgement had convoked the quick and dead,
They would have heard the summons not with dread,
But in the joy of faith that knows no fear;
Come, Lord! come quickly! would this pair have said,
And thou, O Queen of men and Angels dear,
Lift us whom thou hast loved into thy happy sphere!

35

They wept not at the grave, though overwrought
With feelings there as if the heart would break.
Some haply might have deem'd they suffer'd not;
Yet they who look'd upon that Maiden meek
Might see what deep emotion blanch'd her cheek.
An inward light there was which fill'd her eyes,
And told, more forcibly than words could speak,
That this disruption of her earliest ties
Had shaken mind and frame in all their faculties.

36

It was not passion only that disturb'd
Her gentle nature thus; it was not grief;
Nor human feeling by the effort curb'd
Of some misdeeming duty, when relief
Were surely to be found, albeit brief,
If sorrow at its springs might freely flow;
Nor yet repining, stronger than belief
In its first force, that shook the Maiden so,
Though these alone might that frail fabric overthrow.

37

The seeds of death were in her at that hour,
Soon was their quick'ning and their growth display'd;
Thenceforth she droop'd and wither'd like a flower,
Which, when it flourish'd in its native shade,
Some child to his own garden hath convey'd,
And planted in the sun, to pine away.
Thus was the gentle Mooma seen to fade,
Not under sharp disease, but day by day
Losing the powers of life in visible decay.

38

The sunny hue that tinged her cheek was gone,
A deathy paleness settled in its stead;
The light of joy which in her eyes had shone,
Now, like a lamp that is no longer fed,
Grew dim; but, when she raised her heavy head
Some proffer'd help of kindness to partake,
Those feeble eyes a languid lustre shed,
And her sad smile of thankfulness would wake
Grief even in callous hearts for that sweet sufferer's sake.

39

How had Yeruti borne to see her fade?
But he was spared the lamentable sight,
Himself upon the bed of sickness laid.
Joy of his heart, and of his eyes the light
Had Mooma been to him, his soul's delight,
On whom his mind for ever was intent,
His darling thought by day, his dream by night,
The playmate of his youth in mercy sent,
With whom his life had pass'd in peacefullest content.

40

Well was it for the youth, and well for her,
As there in placid helplessness she lay,
He was not present with his love to stir [clay,
Emotions that might shake her feeble
And rouse up in her heart a strong array
Of feelings, hurtful only when they bind [away.
To earth the soul that soon must pass
But this was spared them; and no pain of mind
To trouble her had she, instinctively resign'd.

41

Nor was there wanting to the sufferers aught
Of careful kindness to alleviate
The affliction; for the universal thought
In that poor town was of their sad estate,
And what might best relieve or mitigate
Their case, what help of nature or of art;
And many were the prayers compassionate
That the good Saints their healing would impart,
Breathed in that maid's behalf from many a tender heart.

42

And vows were made for her, if vows might save;
She for herself the while preferr'd no prayer;
For, when she stood beside her Mother's grave,
Her earthly hopes and thoughts had ended there.
Her only longing now was, free as air
From this obstructive flesh to take her flight
For Paradise, and seek her Mother there,
And then regaining her beloved sight
Rest in the eternal sense of undisturb'd delight.

43

Her heart was there, and there she felt and knew
That soon full surely should her spirit be.
And who can tell what foretastes might ensue
To one, whose soul, from all earth's thraldom free,
Was waiting thus for immortality?
Sometimes she spake with short and hurried breath [see,
As if some happy sight she seem'd to
While in the fulness of a perfect faith,
Even with a lover's hope, she lay and look'd for death.

44

I said that for herself the patient maid
Preferr'd no prayer; but oft her feeble tongue
And feebler breath a voice of praise essay'd;
And duly, when the vesper bell was rung, [sung
Her evening hymn in faint accord she
So piously, that they who gather'd round [hung,
Awe-stricken on her heavenly accents
As though they thought it were no mortal sound,
But that the place whereon they stood was holy ground.

45

At such an hour when Dobrizhoffer stood
Beside her bed, oh! how unlike, he thought,
This voice to that which ringing through the wood
Had led him to the secret bower he sought!
And was it then for this that he had brought
That harmless household from their native shade? [lot;
Death had already been the mother's
And this fair Mooma, was she form'd to fade
So soon, . . so soon must she in earth's cold lap be laid?

46

Yet he had no misgiving at the sight;
And wherefore should he? he had acted well,
And, deeming of the ways of God aright, [befell
Knew that to such as these, whate'er
Must needs for them be best. But who could dwell
Unmoved upon the fate of one so young,
So blithesome late? What marvel if tears fell, [hung,
From that good man as over her he
And that the prayers he said came faltering from his tongue!

47

She saw him weep, and she could understand
The cause thus tremulously that made him speak.
By his emotion moved she took his hand; [cheek
A gleam of pleasure o'er her pallid
Pass'd, while she look'd at him with meaning meek,
And for a little while, as loth to part,
Detaining him, her fingers lank and weak,
Play'd with their hold; then letting him depart
She gave him a slow smile that touch'd him to the heart.

48

Mourn not for her! for what hath life to give [here?
That should detain her ready spirit
Thinkest thou that it were worth a wish to live,
Could wishes hold her from her proper sphere?
That simple heart, that innocence sincere
The world would stain. Fitter she ne'er could be
For the great change; and now that change is near,
Oh who would keep her soul from being free?
Maiden beloved of Heaven, to die is best for thee!

49

She hath pass'd away, and on her lips a smile
Hath settled, fix'd in death. Judged they aright,
Or suffer'd they their fancy to beguile
The reason, who believed that she had sight
Of Heaven before her spirit took its flight;
That Angels waited round her lowly bed;
And that in that last effort of delight,
When, lifting up her dying arms, she said,
I come! a ray from heaven upon her face was shed?

50

St. Joachin's had never seen a day
Of such profuse and general grief before,
As when with tapers, dirge, and long array
The Maiden's body to the grave they bore.
All eyes, all hearts, her early death deplore;
Yet, wondering at the fortune they lament,
They the wise ways of Providence adore,
By whom the Pastor surely had been sent,
When to the Mondai woods upon his quest he went.

51

This was, indeed, a chosen family,
For Heaven's especial favour mark'd, they said;
Shut out from all mankind they seem'd to be,
Yet mercifully there were visited,
That so within the fold they might be led, [two
Then call'd away to bliss. Already
In their baptismal innocence were dead;
The third was on the bed of death, they knew,
And in the appointed course must presently ensue.

52

They marvell'd therefore, when the youth once more
Rose from his bed and walk'd abroad again;
Severe had been the malady, and sore
The trial, while life struggled to maintain
Its seat against the sharp assaults of pain:
But life in him was vigorous; long he lay
Ere it could its ascendency regain,
Then, when the natural powers resumed their sway,
All trace of late disease pass'd rapidly away.

53

The first inquiry, when his mind was free,
Was for his Sister. She was gone, they said,
Gone to her Mother, evermore to be
With her in Heaven. At this no tears he shed,
Nor was he seen to sorrow for the dead;
But took the fatal tidings in such part
As if a dull unfeeling nature bred
His unconcern; for hard would seem the heart
To which a loss like his no suffering could impart.

54

How little do they see what is, who frame
Their hasty judgement upon that which seems!
Waters that babble on their way proclaim
A shallowness: but in their strength deep streams
Flow silently. Of death Yeruti deems
Not as an ill, but as the last great good,
Compared wherewith all other he esteems
Transient and void: how then should thought intrude
Of sorrow in his heart for their beatitude?

55

While dwelling in their sylvan solitude
Less had Yeruti learnt to entertain
A sense of age than death. He understood
Something of death from creatures he had slain;
But here the ills which follow in the train
Of age had first to him been manifest, . .
The shrunken form, the limbs that move with pain,
The failing sense, infirmity, unrest, . .
That in his heart he said to die betimes was best.

56

Nor had he lost the dead: they were but gone
Before him, whither he should shortly go.
Their robes of glory they had first put on;
He, cumber'd with mortality, below
Must yet abide awhile, content to know
He should not wait in long expectance here.
What cause then for repining, or for woe?
Soon shall he join them in their heavenly sphere,
And often, even now, he knew that they were near.

57

'Twas but in open day to close his eyes
And shut out the unprofitable view
Of all this weary world's realities,
And forthwith, even as if they lived anew,
The dead were with him; features, form and hue,
And looks and gestures were restored again:
Their actual presence in his heart he knew;
And, when their converse was disturb'd, oh then
How flat and stale it was to mix with living men!

58

But not the less, whate'er was to be done,
With living men he took his part content,
At loom, in garden, or a-field, as one
Whose spirit, wholly on obedience bent,
To every task its prompt attention lent.
Alert in labour he among the best;
And when to church the congregation went,
None more exact than he to cross his breast,
And kneel, or rise, and do in all things like the rest.

59

Cheerful he was, almost like one elate
With wine, before it hath disturb'd his power
Of reason. Yet he seem'd to feel the weight
Of time; for always, when from yonder tower
He heard the clock tell out the passing hour,
The sound appear'd to give him some delight:
And, when the evening shades began to lower,
Then was he seen to watch the fading light
As if his heart rejoiced at the return of night.

60

The old man to whom he had been given in care [said,
To Dobrizhoffer came one day and
The trouble which our youth was thought to bear
With such indifference hath deranged his head.
He says that he is nightly visited;
His Mother and his Sister come and say
That he must give this message from the dead,
Not to defer his baptism, and delay
A soul upon the earth which should no longer stay.

61

A dream the Jesuit deem'd it; a deceit
Upon itself by feverish fancy wrought;
A mere delusion which it were not meet
To censure, lest the youth's distemper'd thought
Might thereby be to farther error brought;
But he himself its vanity would find, . . [not.
They argued thus, . . if it were noticed
His baptism was in fitting time design'd
The Father said, and then dismiss'd it from his mind.

62

But the old Indian came again ere long
With the same tale, and freely then confest [wrong;
His doubt that he had done Yeruti
For something more than common seem'd imprest;
And now he thought that certes it were best
From the youth's lips his own account to hear,
Haply the Father then to his request
Might yield, regarding his desire sincere,
Nor wait for farther time, if there were aught to fear.

63

Considerately the Jesuit heard, and bade
The youth be called. Yeruti told his tale.
Nightly these blessed spirits came, he said,
To warn him he must come within the pale
Of Christ without delay; nor must he fail
This warning to their Pastor to repeat,
Till the renewed entreaty should prevail.
Life's business then for him would be complete,
And 'twas to tell him this they left their starry seat.

64

Came they to him in dreams ? . . he could not tell.
Sleeping or waking now small difference made ;
For even while he slept he knew full well
That his dear Mother and that darling Maid
Both in the Garden of the Dead were laid :
And yet he saw them as in life, the same,
Save only that in radiant robes array'd,
And round about their presence when they came
There shone an effluent light as of a harmless flame.

65

And where he was he knew, the time, the place, . .
All circumstantial things to him were clear.
His own heart undisturb'd. His Mother's face
How could he choose but know ; or, knowing, fear
Her presence and that Maid's, to him more dear
Than all that had been left him now below ?
Their love had drawn them from their happy sphere ;
That dearest love unchanged they came to show ;
And he must be baptized, and then he too might go.

66

With searching ken the Jesuit while he spake
Perused him, if in countenance or tone
Aught might be found appearing to partake
Of madness. Mark of passion there was none ;
None of derangement : in his eye alone,
As from a hidden fountain emanate,
Something of an unusual brightness shone :
But neither word nor look betray'd a state
Of wandering, and his speech, though earnest, was sedate.

67

Regular his pulse, from all disorder free,
The vital powers perform'd their part assign'd ;
And to whate'er was ask'd collectedly
He answer'd. Nothing troubled him in mind ;
Why should it ? Were not all around him kind ?
Did not all love him with a love sincere,
And seem in serving him a joy to find ?
He had no want, no pain, no grief, no fear ;
But he must be baptized ; he could not tarry here.

68

Thy will be done, Father in heaven who art !
The Pastor said, nor longer now denied ;
But with a weight of awe upon his heart
Enter'd the church, and there, the font beside,
With holy water, chrism and salt applied,
Perform'd in all solemnity the rite.
His feeling was that hour with fear allied ;
Yeruti's was a sense of pure delight,
And while he knelt his eyes seem'd larger and more bright.

69

His wish hath been obtain'd, and this being done
His soul was to its full desire content.
The day in its accustom'd course pass'd on,
The Indian mark'd him ere to rest he went,
How o'er his beads, as he was wont, he bent,
And then, like one who casts all care aside, event,
Lay down. The old man fear'd no ill
When, ' Ye are come for me ! ' Yeruti cried ;
' Yes, I am ready now ! ' and instantly he died.

THE POET'S PILGRIMAGE TO WATERLOO.

ΕΥΑΝΘΕΑ Δ' ΑΝΑΒΑΣΟΜΑΙ
ΣΤΟΛΟΝ ΑΜΦ' ΑΡΕΤΑ
ΚΕΛΑΔΕΩΝ.—PINDAR, *Pyth.* 2.

TO

JOHN MAY,

AFTER A FRIENDSHIP OF TWENTY YEARS,

THIS POEM IS INSCRIBED,

IN TESTIMONY OF THE HIGHEST ESTEEM AND AFFECTION,

BY

ROBERT SOUTHEY.

ARGUMENT

THE first part of this Poem describes a journey to the scene of war. The second is in an allegorical form; it exposes the gross material philosophy which has been the guiding principle of the French politicians, from Mirabeau to Buonaparte; and it states the opinions of those persons who lament the restoration of the Bourbons, because the hopes which they entertained from the French Revolution have not been realized: and of those who see only evil, or blind chance, in the course of human events.

To the Christian philosopher all things are consistent and clear. Our first parents brought with them the light of natural religion and the moral law; as men departed from these, they tended towards barbarous and savage life; large portions of the world are in this degenerated state; still, upon the great scale, the human race, from the beginning, has been progressive. But the direct object of Buonaparte was to establish a military despotism wherever his power extended; and the immediate and inevitable consequence of such a system is to brutalize and degrade mankind. The contest in which this country was engaged against that Tyrant, was a struggle between good and evil principles, and never was there a victory so important to the best hopes of human nature as that which was won by British valour at Waterloo, . . its effects extending over the whole civilized world, and involving the vital interests of all mankind.

That victory leaves England in security and peace. In no age and in no country has man ever existed under circumstances so favourable to the full developement of his moral and intellectual faculties, as in England at this time. The peace which she has won by the battle of Waterloo, leaves her at leisure to pursue the great objects and duties of bettering her own condition, and diffusing the blessings of civilization and Christianity.

PROEM

1

ONCE more I see thee, Skiddaw! once again
Behold thee in thy majesty serene,
Where, like the bulwark of this favour'd plain,
Alone thou standest, monarch of the scene . .
Thou glorious Mountain, on whose ample breast
The sunbeams love to play, the vapours love to rest!

2

Once more, O Derwent, to thy aweful shores
I come, insatiate of the accustom'd sight;
And, listening as the eternal torrent roars,
Drink in with eye and ear a fresh delight:
For I have wander'd far by land and sea,
In all my wanderings still remembering thee.

3

Twelve years, (how large a part of man's brief day!)
Nor idly, nor ingloriously spent,
Of evil and of good have held their way,
Since first upon thy banks I pitch'd my tent.
Hither I came in manhood's active prime,
And here my head hath felt the touch of time.

4

Heaven hath with goodly increase blest me here,
Where childless and opprest with grief I came;
With voice of fervent thankfulness sincere
Let me the blessings which are mine proclaim;
Here I possess, . . what more should I require?
Books, children, leisure, . . all my heart's desire.

5

O joyful hour, when to our longing home
The long-expected wheels at length drew nigh!
When the first sound went forth, 'They come, they come!'
And hope's impatience quicken'd every eye!
'Never had man whom Heaven would heap with bliss
More glad return, more happy hour than this.'

6

Aloft on yonder bench, with arms dispread,
My boy stood, shouting there his father's name,
Waving his hat around his happy head;
And there, a younger group, his sisters came:
Smiling they stood with looks of pleased surprize,
While tears of joy were seen in elder eyes.

7

Soon each and all came crowding round to share
The cordial greeting, the beloved sight; [there!
What welcomings of hand and lip were
And, when those overflowings of delight
Subsided to a sense of quiet bliss,
Life hath no purer, deeper happiness.

8

The young companion of our weary way
Found here the end desired of all her ills;
She, who in sickness pining many a day
Hunger'd and thirsted for her native hills,
Forgetful now of sufferings past and pain,
Rejoiced to see her own dear home again.

9

Recover'd now, the homesick mountaineer
Sate by the playmate of her infancy,
Her twin-like comrade, . . render'd doubly dear
For that long absence: full of life was she,
With voluble discourse and eager mien
Telling of all the wonders she had seen.

10

Here silently between her parents stood
My dark-eyed Bertha, timid as a dove;
And gently oft from time to time she woo'd [love,
Pressure of hand, or word, or look of
With impulse shy of bashful tenderness,
Soliciting again the wish'd caress.

11

The younger twain in wonder lost were they,
My gentle Kate; and my sweet Isabel:
Long of our promised coming, day by day,
It had been their delight to hear and tell;
And now, when that long-promised hour was come,
Surprize and wakening memory held them dumb.

12

For in the infant mind, as in the old,
When to its second childhood life declines,
A dim and troubled power doth Memory hold:
But soon the light of young Remembrance shines
Renew'd, and influences of dormant love
Waken'd within, with quickening influence move.

13

O happy season theirs, when absence brings
Small feeling of privation, none of pain,
Yet at the present object love re-springs,
As night-closed flowers at morn expand again!
Nor deem our second infancy unblest,
When gradually composed we sink to rest.

14

Soon they grew blithe as they were wont to be;
Her old endearments each began to seek:
And Isabel drew near to climb my knee,
And pat with fondling hand her father's cheek;
With voice and touch and look reviving thus
The feelings which had slept in long disuse.

15

But there stood one whose heart could entertain
And comprehend the fulness of the joy;
The father, teacher, playmate, was again
Come to his only and his studious boy:
And he beheld again that mother's eye,
Which with such ceaseless care had watch'd his infancy.

16

Bring forth the treasures now, . . a proud display, . . return!
For rich as Eastern merchants we
Behold the black Beguine, the Sister grey,
The Friars whose heads with sober motion turn,
The Ark well-fill'd with all its numerous hives,
Noah and Shem and Ham and Japhet, and their wives.

17

The tumbler, loose of limb; the wrestlers twain;
And many a toy beside of quaint device,
Which, when his fleecy troops no more can gain
Their pasture on the mountains hoar with ice,
The German shepherd carves with curious knife,
Earning in easy toil the food of frugal life.

18

It was a group which Richter, had he view'd,
Might have deem'd worthy of his perfect skill;
The keen impatience of the younger brood,
Their eager eyes and fingers never still;
The hope, the wonder, and the restless joy
Of those glad girls, and that vociferous boy!

19

The aged friend serene with quiet smile,
Who in their pleasure finds her own delight;
The mother's heart-felt happiness the while;
The aunts, rejoicing in the joyful sight;
And he who, in his gaiety of heart,
With glib and noisy tongue perform'd the showman's part.

20

Scoff ye who will! but let me, gracious Heaven,
Preserve this boyish heart till life's last day!
For so that inward light by Nature given
Shall still direct, and cheer me on my way,
And, brightening as the shades of age descend,
Shine forth with heavenly radiance at the end.

21

This was the morning light vouchsafed, which led
My favour'd footsteps to the Muses' hill,
Whose arduous paths I have not ceased to tread,
From good to better persevering still;
And, if but self-approved, to praise or blame
Indifferent, while I toil for lasting fame.

22

And O ye nymphs of Castaly divine!
Whom I have dutifully served so long,
Benignant to your votary now incline,
That I may win your ear with gentle song,
Such as, I ween, is ne'er disown'd by you, . .
A low prelusive strain, to nature true.

23

But when I reach at themes of loftier thought,
And tell of things surpassing earthly sense,
(Which by yourselves, O Muses, I am taught,)
Then aid me with your fuller influence,
And to the height of that great argument
Support my spirit in her strong ascent!

24

So may I boldly round my temples bind
The laurel which my master Spenser wore;
And, free in spirit as the mountain wind
That makes my symphony in this lone hour,
No perishable song of triumph raise,
But sing in worthy strains my Country's praise.

THE POET'S PILGRIMAGE

PART I

THE JOURNEY

ΤΩΝ ΠΟΛΥΚΤΟΝΩΝ ΓΑΡ
ΟΥΚ ΑΣΚΟΠΟΙ ΘΕΟΙ.
ÆSCHYLUS.

I. FLANDERS

1

Our world hath seen the work of war's debate
Consummated in one momentous day
Twice in the course of time; and twice the fate
Of unborn ages hung upon the fray:
First at Platæa, in that aweful hour
When Greece united smote the Persian's power.

2

For, had the Persian triumph'd, then the spring
Of knowledge from that living source had ceast;
All would have fallen before the barbarous King,
Art, Science, Freedom; the despotic East,
Setting her mark upon the race subdued,
Had stamp'd them in the mould of sensual servitude.

3

The second day was that when Martel broke
The Musselmen, delivering France oppresst,
And, in one mighty conflict, from the yoke
Of misbelieving Mecca saved the West;
Else had the Impostor's law destroy'd the ties
Of public weal and private charities.

4

Such was the danger, when that Man of Blood
Burst from the iron Isle, and brought again,
Like Satan rising from the sulphurous flood,
His impious legions to the battle plain:
Such too was our deliverance, when the [field
Of Waterloo beheld his fortunes yield.

5

I, who with faith unshaken from the first,
Even when the Tyrant seem'd to touch the skies,
Had look'd to see the high-blown bubble burst,
And for a fall conspicuous as his rise,
Even in that faith had look'd not for defeat
So swift, so overwhelming, so complete.

6

Me most of all men it behoved to raise
The strain of triumph for this foe subdued,
To give a voice to joy, and in my lays
Exalt a nation's hymn of gratitude,
And blazon forth in song that day's renown, . .
For I was graced with England's laurel crown.

7

And, as I once had journey'd to behold
Far off, Ourique's consecrated field,
Where Portugal the faithful and the bold
Assumed the symbols of her sacred shield,
More reason now that I should bend my way
The field of British glory to survey.

8

So forth I set upon this pilgrimage,
And took the partner of my life with me, [age
And one dear girl, just ripe enough of
Retentively to see what I should see;
That thus, with mutual recollections fraught,
We might bring home a store for after-thought.

9

We left our pleasant Land of Lakes, and went
Throughout whole England's length, a weary way,
Even to the farthest shores of eastern Kent:
Embarking there upon an autumn day,
Toward Ostend we held our course all night,
And anchor'd by its quay at morning's earliest light.

10

Small vestige there of that old siege appears,
And little of remembrance would be found,
When for the space of three long painful years
The persevering Spaniard girt it round,
And gallant youths of many a realm from far
Went students to that busy school of war.

11

Yet still those wars of obstinate defence
Their lessons offer to the soldier's hand;
Large knowledge may the statesman draw from thence:
And still from underneath the drifted sand,
Sometimes the storm, or passing foot lays bare
Part of the harvest Death has gather'd there.

12

Peace be within thy walls, thou famous town,
For thy brave bearing in those times of old;
May plenty thy industrious children crown,
And prosperous merchants day by day behold
Many a rich vessel from the injurious sea
Enter the bosom of thy quiet quay.

13

Embarking there, we glided on between
Strait banks raised high above the level land,
With many a cheerful dwelling white and green
In goodly neighbourhood on either hand.
Huge-timber'd bridges o'er the passage lay,
Which wheel'd aside and gave us easy way.

14

Four horses, aided by the favouring breeze,
Drew our gay vessel, slow and sleek and large;
Crack goes the whip, the steersman at his ease
Directs the way, and steady went the barge.
Ere evening closed to Bruges thus we came, . .
Fair city, worthy of her ancient fame.

15

The season of her splendour is gone by,
Yet every where its monuments remain;
Temples which rear their stately heads on high,
Canals that intersect the fertile plain,
Wide streets and squares, with many a court and hall
Spacious and undefaced, but ancient all.

16

Time hath not wrong'd her, nor hath Ruin sought
Rudely her splendid structures to destroy,
Save in those recent days with evil fraught,
When Mutability, in drunken joy
Triumphant, and from all restraint released,
Let loose the fierce and many-headed beast.

17

But for the scars in that unhappy rage
Inflicted, firm she stands and undecay'd;
Like our first sires', a beautiful old age
Is hers, in venerable years array'd;
And yet to her benignant stars may bold,
What fate denies to man, . . a second spring.

18

When I may read of tilts in days of old,
And tourneys graced by chieftains of renown,
Fair dames, grave citizens, and warriors bold,
If Fancy would pourtray some stately town,
Which for such pomp fit theatre should be,
Fair Bruges, I shall then remember thee.

19

Nor did thy landscape yield me less delight,
Seen from the deck as slow it glided by,
Or when beneath us, from thy Belfroy's height,
Its boundless circle met the bending sky;
The waters smooth and straight, thy proper boast,
And lines of road-side trees in long perspective lost.

20

No happier landscape may on earth be seen,
Rich gardens all around and fruitful groves,
White dwellings trim relieved with lively green,
The pollard that the Flemish painter loves,
With aspins tall and poplars fair to view,
Casting o'er all the land a grey and willowy hue.

21

My lot hath lain in scenes sublime and rude,
Where still devoutly I have served and sought
In boyhood was I wont, with rapture fraught,
Amid those rocks and woods to wander free,
Where Avon hastens to the Severn sea.

22

In Cintra also have I dwelt erewhile,
That earthly Eden, and have seen at eve
The sea-mists, gathering round its mountain pile,
Whelm with their billows all below, but leave
One pinnacle sole seen, whereon it stood
Like the Ark on Ararat, above the flood.

23

And now am I a Cumbrian mountaineer;
Their wintry garment of unsullied snow
The mountains have put on, the heavens are clear,
And yon dark lake spreads silently below;
Who sees them only in their summer hour
Sees but their beauties half, and knows not half their power.

24

Yet hath the Flemish scene a charm for me
That soothes and wins upon the willing heart;
Though all is level as the sleeping sea,
A natural beauty springs from perfect art,
And something more than pleasure fills the breast
To see how well-directed toil is blest.

25

Two nights have pass'd; the morning opens well,
Fair are the aspects of the favouring sky;
Soon yon sweet chimes the appointed hour will tell,
For here to music Time moves merrily:
Aboard! aboard! no more must we delay, . .
Farewell, good people of the *Fleur de Bled!*

26

Beside the busy wharf the Trekschuit rides,
With painted plumes and tent-like awning gay;
Carts, barrows, coaches, hurry from all sides,
And passengers and porters throng the way,
Contending all at once in clamorous speech,
French, Flemish, English, each confusing each.

27

All disregardant of the Babel sound,
A swan kept oaring near with upraised eye, . .
A beauteous pensioner, who daily found
The bounty of such casual company;
Nor left us till the bell said all was done,
And slowly we our watery way begun.

28

Europe can boast no richer, goodlier scene,
Than that through which our pleasant passage lay,
By fertile fields and fruitful gardens green,
The journey of a short autumnal day;
Sleek well-fed steeds our steady vessel drew,
The heavens were fair, and Mirth was of our crew.

29

Along the smooth canal's unbending line,
Beguiling time with light discourse, we went,
Nor wanting savoury food nor generous wine.
Ashore too there was feast and merriment;
The jovial peasants at some village fair
Were dancing, drinking, smoking, gambling there.

30

Of these, or of the ancient towers of Ghent
Renown'd, I must not tarry now to tell;
Of picture, or of church, or monument;
Nor how we mounted to that ponderous bell,
The Belfroy's boast, which bears old Roland's name,
Nor yields to Oxford Tom, or Tom of Lincoln's fame.

31

Nor of that sisterhood, whom to their rule
Of holy life no hasty vows restrain,
Who, meek disciples of the Christian school,
Watch by the bed of sickness and of pain:
Oh what a strength divine doth Faith impart
To inborn goodness in the female heart!

32

A gentle party from the shores of Kent
Thus far had been our comrades, as befell;
Fortune had link'd us first, and now Consent, . .
For why should Choice divide whom Chance so well
Had join'd, and they to view the famous ground,
Like us, were to the Field of Battle bound.

33

Farther as yet they look'd not than that quest, . .
The land was all before them where to choose.
So we consorted here as seemed best;
Who would such pleasant fellowship refuse
Of ladies fair and gentle comrades free? . .
Certes we were a joyous company.

34

Yet lack'd we not discourse for graver times,
Such as might suit sage auditors, I ween;
For some among us in far distant climes
The cities and the ways of men had seen;
No unobservant travellers they, but well
Of what they there had learnt they knew to tell.

35

The one of frozen Moscovy could speak,
And well his willing listeners entertain
With tales of that inclement region bleak,
The pageantry and pomp of Catherine's reign,
And that proud city, which with wise intent
The mighty founder raised, his own great monument.

36

And one had dwelt with Malabars and Moors,
Where fertile earth and genial heaven dispense
Profuse their bounty upon Indian shores;
Whate'er delights the eye, or charms the sense,
The valleys with perpetual fruitage blest,
The mountains with unfading foliage drest.

37

He those barbaric palaces had seen,
The work of Eastern potentates of old;
And in the Temples of the Rock had been,
Awe-struck their dread recesses to behold;
A gifted hand was his, which by its skill
Could to the eye pourtray such wondrous scenes at will.

38

A third, who from the Land of Lakes with me
Went out upon this pleasant pilgrimage,
Had sojourn'd long beyond the Atlantic sea;
Adventurous was his spirit as his age,
For he in far Brazil, through wood and waste,
Had travell'd many a day, and there his heart was placed.

39

Wild region, . . happy if at night he found
The shelter of some rude Tapuya's shed;
Else would he take his lodgement on the ground,
Or from the tree suspend his hardy bed;
And sometimes, starting at the jaguar's cries,
See through the murky night the prowler's fiery eyes.

40

And sometimes over thirsty deserts drear,
And sometimes over flooded plains he went; . .
A joy it was his fire-side tales to hear,
And he a comrade to my heart's content:
For he of what I most desired could tell,
And loved the Portugals because he knew them well.

41

Here to the easy barge we bade adieu;
Land-travellers now along the well-paved way,
Where road-side trees, still lengthening on the view,
Before us and behind unvarying lay:
Through lands well-labour'd to Alost we came,
Where whilome treachery stain'd the English name.

42

Then saw we Afflighem, by ruin rent,
Whose venerable fragments strew the land;
Grown wise too late, the multitude lament
The ravage of their own unhappy hand;
Its records in their frenzy torn and tost,
Its precious stores of learning wreck'd and lost.

43

Whatever else we saw was cheerful all,
The signs of steady labour well repaid;
The grapes were ripe on every cottage wall,
And merry peasants seated in the shade
Of garner, or within the open door,
From gather'd hop-vines pluck'd the plenteous store.

44

Through Assche for water and for cakes renown'd
We pass'd, pursuing still our way, though late;
And when the shades of night were closing round,
Brussels received us through her friendly gate, . .
Proud city, fated many a change to see,
And now the seat of new-made monarchy.

II. BRUSSELS

1

WHERE might a gayer spectacle be found
Than Brussels offer'd on that festive night,
Her squares and palaces irradiate round
To welcome the imperial Muscovite,
Who now, the wrongs of Europe twice redress'd,
Came there a welcome and a glorious guest?

2

Her mile-long avenue with lamps was hung,
Innumerous, which diffused a light like day;
Where through the line of splendour, old and young
Paraded all in festival array;
While fiery barges, plying to and fro,
Illumined as they moved the liquid glass below.

3

By day with hurrying crowds the streets were throng'd,
To gain of this great Czar a passing sight;
And music, dance, and banquetings prolong'd
The various work of pleasure through the night.
You might have deem'd, to see that joyous town,
That wretchedness and pain were there unknown.

4

Yet three short months had scarcely pass'd away,
Since, shaken with the approaching battle's breath,
Her inmost chambers trembled with dismay;
And now within her walls insatiate Death,
Devourer whom no harvest e'er can fill,
The gleanings of that field was gathering still.

5

Within those walls there linger'd at that hour [pain,
Many a brave soldier on the bed of
Whom aid of human art should ne'er restore [again;
To see his country and his friends
And many a victim of that fell debate,
Whose life yet waver'd in the scales of fate.

6

Some I beheld, for whom the doubtful scale [length;
Had to the side of life inclined at
Emaciate was their form, their features pale, [strength;
The limbs so vigorous late, bereft of
And, for their gay habiliments of yore,
The habit of the House of Pain they wore.

7

Some in the courts of that great hospital,
That they might taste the sun and open air,
Crawl'd out; or sate beneath the southern wall;
Or, leaning in the gate, stood gazing there
In listless guise upon the passers by,
Whiling away the hours of slow recovery.

8

Others in waggons borne abroad I saw,
Albeit recovering, still a mournful sight:
Languid and helpless some were stretch'd on straw,
Some more advanced sustain'd themselves upright,
And with bold eye and careless front, methought,
Seem'd to set wounds and death again at nought.

9

Well had it fared with these; nor went it ill
With those whom war had of a limb bereft,
Leaving the life untouch'd, that they had still [left;
Enough for health as for existence
But some there were who lived to draw the breath
Of pain through hopeless years of lingering death.

10

Here might the hideous face of war be seen,
Stript of all pomp, adornment, and disguise;
It was a dismal spectacle, I ween,
Such as might well to the beholders' eyes [mind
Bring sudden tears, and make the pious
Grieve for the crimes and follies of mankind.

11

What had it been then in the recent days
Of that great triumph, when the open wound [ways
Was festering, and along the crowded
Hour after hour was heard the incessant sound
Of wheels, which o'er the rough and stony road
Convey'd their living agonizing load!

12

Hearts little to the melting mood inclined
Grew sick to see their sufferings; and the thought
Still comes with horror to the shuddering mind
Of those sad days when Belgian ears were taught
The British soldier's cry, half groan, half prayer,
Breathed when his pain is more than he can bear.

13

Brave spirits, nobly had their part been done!
Brussels could show, where Senne's slow waters glide,
The cannon which their matchless valour won,
Proud trophies of the field, ranged side by side,
Where as they stood in inoffensive row,
The solitary guard paced to and fro.

14

Unconscious instruments of human woe,
Some for their mark the royal lilies bore,
Fix'd there when Britain was the Bourbon's foe;
And some emboss'd in brazen letters wore
The sign of that abhorr'd misrule, which broke
The guilty nation for a Tyrant's yoke.

15

Others were stampt with that Usurper's name, . .
Recorders thus of many a change were they,
Their deadly work through every change the same;
Nor ever had they seen a bloodier day,
Than when, as their late thunders roll'd around,
Brabant in all her cities felt the sound.

16

Then ceased their occupation. From the field
Of battle here in triumph were they brought;
Ribands and flowers and laurels half conceal'd
Their brazen mouths, so late with ruin fraught;
Women beheld them pass with joyful eyes,
And children clapt their hands and rent the air with cries.

17

Now idly on the banks of Senne they lay,
Like toys with which a child is pleased no more:
Only the British traveller bends his way
To see them on that unfrequented shore,
And, as a mournful feeling blends with pride,
Remembers those who fought, and those who died.

III. THE FIELD OF BATTLE

1

Southward from Brussels lies the field of blood,
Some three hours' journey for a well-girt man;
A horseman who in haste pursued his road
Would reach it as the second hour began.
The way is through a forest deep and wide,
Extending many a mile on either side.

2

No cheerful woodland this of antic trees,
With thickets varied and with sunny glade;
Look where he will, the weary traveller sees
One gloomy, thick, impenetrable shade
Of tall straight trunks, which move before his sight,
With interchange of lines of long green light.

3

Here, where the woods receding from the road
Have left on either hand an open space
For fields and gardens and for man's abode,
Stands Waterloo; a little lowly place,
Obscure till now, when it hath risen to fame,
And given the victory its English name.

4

What time the second Carlos ruled in Spain,
Last of the Austrian line by Fate decreed,
Here Castanaca reared a votive fane,
Praying the Patron Saints to bless with seed
His childless sovereign; Heaven denied an heir,
And Europe mourn'd in blood the frustrate prayer.

5

That temple to our hearts was hallow'd now:
For many a wounded Briton there was laid, [allow
With such poor help as time might then
From the fresh carnage of the field convey'd;
And they whom human succours could not save
Here in its precincts found a hasty grave.

6

And here on marble tablets set on high,
In English lines by foreign workmen traced,
Are names familiar to an English eye;
Their brethren here the fit memorials placed, [tell
Whose unadorned inscriptions briefly
Their gallant comrades' rank, and where they fell.

7

The stateliest monument of public pride
Enrich'd with all magnificence of art,
To honour Chieftains who in victory died,
Would wake no stronger feeling in the heart
Than these plain tablets, by the soldier's hand
Raised to his comrades in a foreign land.

8

Not far removed you find the burial-ground,
Yet so that skirts of woodland intervene;
A small enclosure, rudely fenced around;
Three grave-stones only for the dead are seen:
One bears the name of some rich villager,
The first for whom a stone was planted there.

9

Beneath the second is a German laid,
Whom Bremen, shaking off the Frenchman's yoke,
Sent with her sons the general cause to aid; [stroke,
He in the fight received his mortal
Yet for his country's aggravated woes
Lived to see vengeance on her hated foes.

10

A son of Erin sleeps below the third;
By friendly hands his body where it lay
Upon the field of blood had been interr'd,
And thence by those who mourn'd him borne away
In pious reverence for departed worth,
Laid here with holy rites in consecrated earth.

11

Repose in peace, brave soldiers, who have found
In Waterloo and Soigny's shade your rest!
Ere this hath British valour made that ground
Sacred to you, and for your foes unblest,
When Marlborough here, victorious in his might
Surprized the French, and smote them in their flight.

12

Those wars are as a tale of times gone by,
For so doth perishable fame decay, . .
Here on the ground wherein the slaughter'd lie,
The memory of that fight is pass'd away; . .
And even our glorious Blenheim to the field
Of Waterloo and Wellington must yield.

13

Soon shall we reach that scene of mighty deeds,
In one unbending line a short league hence;
Aright the forest from the road recedes,
With wide sweep trending south and westward thence;
Aleft along the line it keeps its place,
Some half hour's distance at a traveller's pace.

14

The country here expands, a wide-spread scene;
No Flemish gardens fringed with willows these,
Nor rich Brabantine pastures ever green,
With trenches lined and rows of aspin trees;
In tillage here the unwooded open land
Returns its increase to the farmer's hand.

15

Behold the scene where Slaughter had full sway!
A mile before us lieth Mount St. John,
The hamlet which the Highlanders that day
Preserved from spoil; yet as much farther on
The single farm is placed, now known to fame,
Which from the sacred hedge derives its name.

16

Straight onward yet for one like distance more,
And there the house of Belle Alliance
So named, I guess, by some in days of yore,
In friendship or in wedlock joining hands:
Little did they who call'd it thus foresee
The place that name should hold in history!

17

Beyond these points the fight extended not . .
Small theatre for such a tragedy!
Its breadth scarce more, from eastern Papelot
To where the groves of Hougoumont on high
Rear in the west their venerable head,
And cover with their shade the countless dead.

18

But wouldst thou tread this celebrated ground,
And trace with understanding eyes a scene
Above all other fields of war renown'd,
From western Hougoumont thy way begin;
There was our strength on that side, and there first,
In all its force, the storm of battle burst.

19

Strike eastward then across toward La Haye,
The single farm: with dead the fields between
Are lined, and thou wilt see upon the way
Long wave-like dips and swells which intervene,
Such as would breathe the war-horse, and impede,
When that deep soil was wet, his martial speed.

20

This is the ground whereon the young Nassau,
Emuling that day his ancestor's renown,
Received his hurt; admiring Belgium saw
The youth proved worthy of his destined crown:
All tongues his prowess on that day proclaim,
And children lisp his praise and bless their Prince's name.

21

When thou hast reach'd La Haye, survey it well,
Here was the heat and centre of the strife;
This point must Britain hold whate'er befell,
And here both armies were profuse of life:
Once it was lost, . . and then a stander by
Belike had trembled for the victory.

22

Not so the leader, on whose equal mind
Such interests hung in that momentous day;
So well had he his motley troops assign'd,
That where the vital points of action lay,
There had he placed those soldiers whom he knew
No fears could quail, no dangers could subdue.

23

Small was his British force, nor had he here
The Portugals, in heart so near allied,
The worthy comrades of his late career,
Who fought so oft and conquer'd at his side, [advance,
When, with the Red Cross join'd in brave
The glorious Quinas mock'd the air of France.

24

Now of the troops with whom he took the field
Some were of doubtful faith, and others raw;
He station'd these where they might stand or yield; [saw,
But where the stress of battle he fore-
There were his links (his own strong words I speak)
And rivets which no human force could break.

25

O my brave countrymen, ye answer'd well
To that heroic trust! Nor less did ye,
Whose worth your grateful country aye shall tell,
True children of our sister Germany,
Who, while she groan'd beneath the oppressor's chain,
Fought for her freedom in the fields of Spain.

26

La Haye, bear witness! sacred is it hight,
And sacred is it truly from that day;
For never braver blood was spent in fight
Than Britain here hath mingled with the clay.
Set where thou wilt thy foot, thou scarce can'st tread
Here on a spot unhallow'd by the dead.

27

Here was it that the Highlanders withstood [weight
The tide of hostile power, received its
With resolute strength, and stemm'd and turn'd the flood;
And fitly here, as in that Grecian strait,
The funeral stone might say, Go, traveller, tell
Scotland, that in our duty here we fell.

28

Still eastward from this point thy way pursue.
There grows a single hedge along the lane, . .
No other is there far or near in view:
The raging enemy essay'd in vain
To pass that line, . . a braver foe withstood,
And this whole ground was moisten'd with their blood.

29

Leading his gallant men as he was wont,
The hot assailants' onset to repel,
Advancing hat in hand, here in the front
Of battle and of danger, Picton fell;
Lamented Chief! than whom no braver name
His country's annals shall consign to fame.

30

Scheldt had not seen us, had his voice been heard,
Return with shame from her disastrous coast:
But Fortune soon to fairer fields preferr'd
His worth approved, which Cambria long may boast:
France felt him then, and Portugal and Spain
His honour'd memory will for aye retain.

31

Hence to the high-wall'd house of Papelot,
The battle's boundary on the left, incline;
Here thou seest Frischermont not far remote,
From whence, like ministers of wrath divine,
The Prussians, issuing on the yielding foe,
Consummated their great and tota overthrow.

32

Deem not that I the martial skill should boast
Where horse and foot were station'd here to tell,
What points were occupied by either host,
And how the battle raged, and what befell,
And how our great Commander's eagle eye,
Which comprehended all, secured the victory.

33

This were the historian's, not the poet's part;
Such task would ill the gentle Muse beseem,
Who to the thoughtful mind and pious heart
Comes with her offering from this aweful theme;
Content if what she saw and gather'd there
She may in unambitious song declare.

34

Look how upon the Ocean's treacherous face
The breeze and summer sunshine softly play,
And the green-heaving billows bear no trace
Of all the wrath and wreck of yesterday; . .
So from the field which here we look'd upon
The vestiges of dreadful war were gone.

35

Earth had received into her silent womb
Her slaughter'd creatures: horse and man they lay,
And friend and foe, within the general tomb.
Equal had been their lot; one fatal day
For all, . . one labour, . . and one place of rest
They found within their common parent's breast.

36

The passing seasons had not yet effaced
The stamp of numerous hoofs impress'd by force
Of cavalry, whose path might still be traced.
Yet Nature every where resumed her course;
Low pansies to the sun their purple gave,
And the soft poppy blossom'd on the grave.

37

In parts the careful farmer had renew'd
His labours, late by battle frustrated;
And where the unconscious soil had been imbued
With blood, profusely there like water shed,
There had his plough-share turn'd the guilty ground,
And the green corn was springing all around.

38

The graves he left for natural thought humane
Untouch'd; and here and there, where in the strife
Contending feet had trampled down the grain,
Some hardier roots were found, which of their life
Tenacious, had put forth a second head,
And sprung, and ear'd, and ripen'd on the dead.

39

Some marks of wreck were scatter'd all around,
As shoe, and belt, and broken bandoleer,
And hats which bore the mark of mortal wound;
Gun-flints and balls for those who closelier peer;
And sometimes did the breeze upon its breath
Bear from ill-cover'd graves a taint of death.

40

More vestige of destructive man was seen
Where man in works of peace had labour'd more;
At Hougoumont the hottest strife had been,
Where trees and walls the mournful record bore
Of war's wild rage, trunks pierced with many a wound,
And roofs and half-burnt rafters on the ground.

41

A goodly mansion this, with gardens fair,
And ancient groves and fruitful orchard wide,
Its dove-cot and its decent house of prayer,
Its ample stalls and garners well supplied,
And spacious bartons clean, well-wall'd around,
Where all the wealth of rural life was found.

42

That goodly mansion on the ground was laid,
Save here and there a blacken'd broken wall;
The wounded who were borne beneath its shade
Had there been crush'd and buried by the fall;
And there they lie where they received their doom, . .
Oh let no hand disturb that honourable tomb!

43

Contiguous to this wreck the little fane,
For worship hallow'd, still uninjured stands,
Save that its Crucifix displays too plain
The marks of outrage from irreverent hands.
Alas, to think such irreligious deed
Of wrong from British soldiers should proceed!

44

The dove-cot too remains; scared at the fight
The birds sought shelter in the forest shade;
But still they kept their native haunts in sight,
And when few days their terror had allay'd,
Forsook again the solitary wood,
For their old home and human neighbourhood.

45

The gardener's dwelling was untouch'd; his wife
Fled with her children to some near retreat,
And there lay trembling for her husband's life:
He stood the issue, saw the foe's retreat,
And lives unhurt where thousands fell around,
To tell the story of that famous ground.

46

His generous dog was well approved that hour,
By courage as by love to man allied;
He through the fiery storm and iron shower
Kept the ground bravely by his master's side:
And now when to the stranger's hand he draws,
The noble beast seems conscious of applause.

47

Toward the grove the wall with musket holes
Is pierced; our soldiers here their station held
Against the foe, and many were the souls
Then from their fleshly tenements expell'd.
Six hundred Frenchmen have been burnt close by,
And underneath one mound their bones and ashes lie.

48

One streak of blood upon the wall was traced,
In length a man's just stature from the head;
There where it gushed you saw it unefaced;
Of all the blood which on that day was shed
This mortal stain alone remain'd impress'd, . .
The all-devouring earth had drunk the rest.

49

Here from the heaps who strew'd the fatal plain
Was Howard's corse by faithful hands convey'd,
And, not to be confounded with the slain,
Here in a grave apart with reverence laid,
Till hence his honour'd relics o'er the seas
Were borne to England, there to rest in peace.

50

Another grave had yielded up its dead,
From whence to bear his son a father came,
That he might lay him where his own grey head
Ere long must needs be laid. That soldier's name
Was not remember'd there, yet may the verse
Present this reverent tribute to his herse.

51

Was it a soothing or a mournful thought,
Amid this scene of slaughter as we stood,
Where armies had with recent fury fought,
To mark how gentle Nature still pursued
Her quiet course, as if she took no care
For what her noblest work had suffer'd there?

52

The pears had ripen'd on the garden wall;
Those leaves which on the autumnal earth were spread
The trees, though pierced and scarr'd with many a ball,
Had only in their natural season shed:
Flowers were in seed whose buds to swell began
When such wild havoc here was made of man!

53

Throughout the garden, fruits and herbs and flowers
You saw in growth, or ripeness, or decay;
The green and well-trimm'd dial mark'd the hours
With gliding shadow as they pass'd away;
Who would have thought, to see this garden fair,
Such horrors had so late been acted there!

54

Now Hougoumont, farewell to thy domain!
Might I dispose of thee, no woodman's hand
Should e'er thy venerable groves profane;
Untouch'd, and like a temple, should they stand,
And, consecrate by general feeling, wave
Their branches o'er the ground where sleep the brave.

55

Thy ruins as they fell should aye remain, . .
What monument so fit for those below?
Thy garden through whole ages should retain
The form and fashion which it weareth now,
That future pilgrims here might all things see,
Such as they were at this great victory.

IV. THE SCENE OF WAR

1

No cloud the azure vault of heaven distain'd
That day, when we the field of war survey'd;
The leaves were falling, but the groves retain'd
Foliage enough for beauty and for shade;
Soft airs prevail'd, and through the sunny hours
The bees were busy on the year's last flowers.

2

Well was the season with the scene combined.
The autumnal sunshine suited well the mood
Which here possess'd the meditative mind, . .
A human sense upon the field of blood,
A Christian thankfulness, a British pride,
Temper'd by solemn thought, yet still to joy allied.

3

What British heart that would not feel a flow,
Upon that ground, of elevating pride?
What British cheek is there that would not glow
To hear our country blest and magnified? . .
For Britain here was blest by old and young,
Admired by every heart and praised by every tongue.

4

Not for brave bearing in the field alone
Doth grateful Belgium bless the British name;
The order and the perfect honour shown
In all things, have enhanced the soldier's fame:
For this we heard the admiring people raise
One universal voice sincere of praise.

5

Yet with indignant feeling they enquired
Wherefore we spared the author of this strife?
Why had we not, as highest law required,
With ignominy closed the culprit's life?
For him alone had all this blood been shed, . .
Why had not vengeance struck the guilty head?

6

O God! they said, it was a piteous thing
To see the after-horrors of the fight,
The lingering death, the hopeless suffering, . .
What heart of flesh unmoved could bear the sight?
One man was cause of all this world of woe, . .
Ye had him, . . and ye did not strike the blow!

7

How will ye answer to all after time
For that great lesson which ye fail'd to give?
As if excess of guilt excused the crime,
Black as he is with blood ye let him live!
Children of evil, take your course henceforth,
For what is Justice but a name on earth!

8

Vain had it been with these in glosing speech
Of precedents to use the specious tongue:
This might perplex the ear, but fail to reach
The heart, from whence that honest feeling sprung:
And, had I dared my inner sense belie,
The voice of blood was there to join them in their cry.

9

We left the field of battle in such mood
As human hearts from thence should bear away,
And musing thus our purposed route pursued,
Which still through scenes of recent bloodshed lay,
Where Prussia late with strong and stern delight
Hung on her hated foes to persecute their flight.

10

No hour for tarriance that, or for remorse!
Vengeance, who long had hunger'd, took her fill,
And Retribution held its righteous course:
As when in elder time the Sun stood still
On Gibeon, and the Moon above the vale
Of Ajalon hung motionless and pale.

11

And what though no portentous day was given
To render here the work of wrath complete,
The Sun, I ween, seem'd standing still in heaven
To those who hurried from that dire defeat;
And, when they pray'd for darkness in their flight,
The Moon arose upon them broad and bright.

12

No covert might they find; the open land,
O'er which so late exultingly they pass'd,
Lay all before them and on either hand;
Close on their flight the avengers follow'd fast,
And when they reach'd Genappe and there drew breath,
Short respite found they there from fear and death.

13

That fatal town betray'd them to more loss;
Through one long street the only passage lay,
And then the narrow bridge they needs must cross
Where Dyle, a shallow streamlet, cross'd the way:
For life they fled, . . no thought had they but fear,
And their own baggage choak'd the outlet here.

14

He who had bridged the Danube's affluent stream,
With all the unbroken Austrian power in sight,
(So had his empire vanish'd like a dream)
Was by this brook impeded in his flight; . . [there . .
And then what passions did he witness
Rage, terror, execrations, and despair!

15

Ere through the wreck his passage could be made,
Three miserable hours, which seem'd like years,
Was he in that ignoble strait delay'd;
The dreadful Prussian's cry was in his ears, [hell
Fear in his heart, and in his soul that
Whose due rewards he merited so well.

16

Foremost again as he was wont to be
In flight, though not the foremost in the strife,
The Tyrant hurried on, of infamy
Regardless, nor regarding ought but life; . . [faith
Oh wretch! without the courage or the
To die with those whom he had led to death!

17

Meantime his guilty followers in disgrace,
Whose pride for ever now was beaten down, [place;
Some in the houses sought a hiding-
While at the entrance of that fatal town

Others, who yet some show of heart
display'd,
A short vain effort of resistance made:

18

Feeble and ill-sustain'd! The foe burst
through:
With unabating heat they search'd
around;
The wretches from their lurking-holes
they drew, . .
Such mercy as the French had given
they found;
Death had more victims there in that
one hour
Than fifty years might else have ren-
der'd to his power.

19

Here did we inn upon our pilgrimage,
After such day an unfit resting-place:
For who from ghastly thoughts could
disengage
The haunted mind, when every where
the trace
Of death was seen, . . the blood-stain on
the wall,
And musquet-marks in chamber and in
hall!

20

All talk too was of death. They shew'd
us here
The room where Brunswick's body
had been laid,
Where his brave followers, bending o'er
the bier,
In bitterness their vow of vengeance
made; [Chief,
Where Wellington beheld the slaughter'd
And for awhile gave way to manly grief.

21

Duhesme, whose crimes the Catalans
may tell,
Died here; . . with sabre strokes the
posts are scored,
Hewn down upon the threshold where
he fell,
Himself then tasting of the ruthless
sword; [Spain,
A Brunswicker discharged the debt of
And where he dropt the stone preserves
the stain.

22

Too much of life hath on thy plains been
shed,
Brabant! so oft the scene of war's
debate;
But ne'er with blood were they so
largely fed
As in this rout and wreck; when
righteous Fate
Brought on the French, in warning to
all times,
A vengeance wide and sweeping as their
crimes:

23

Vengeance for Egypt and for Syria's
wrong;
For Portugal's unutterable woes;
For Germany, who suffer'd all too
long
Beneath these lawless, faithless, god-
less foes;
For blood which on the Lord so long
had cried,
For Earth oppress, and Heaven insulted
and defied.

24

We follow'd from Genappe their line of
flight
To the Cross Roads, where Britain's
sons sustain'd
Against such perilous force the desperate
fight:
Deserving for that field so well main-
tain'd,
Such fame as for a like devotion's
meed
The world hath to the Spartan band
decreed.

25

Upon this ground the noble Brunswick
died,
Led on too rashly by his ardent
heart;
Long shall his grateful country tell with
pride
How manfully he chose the better
part:
When groaning Germany in chains was
bound,
He only of her Princes faithful found.

26

And here right bravely did the German band
Once more sustain their well-deserved applause;
As when, revenging there their native land,
In Spain they labour'd for the general cause.
In this most arduous strife none more than they
Endured the heat and burthen of the day.

27

Here too we heard the praise of British worth,
Still best approved when most severely tried;
Here were broad patches of loose-lying earth,
Sufficing scarce the mingled bones to hide, . .
And half-uncover'd graves, where one might see
The loathliest features of mortality.

28

Eastward from hence we struck, and reach'd the field
Of Ligny, where the Prussian, on that day
By far-outnumbering force constrain'd to yield,
Fronted the foe, and held them still at bay;
And in that brave defeat acquired fresh claim
To glory, and enhanced his country's fame.

29

Here was a scene which fancy might delight
To treasure up among her cherish'd stores,
And bring again before the inward sight
Often when she recalls the long-past hours; . .
Well-cultured hill and dale extending wide,
Hamlets and village spires on every side;

30

The autumnal-tinted groves; the upland mill
Which oft was won and lost amid the fray:
Green pastures water'd by the silent rill;
The lordly Castle yielding to decay,
With bridge and barbacan and moat and tower,
A fairer sight perchance than when it frown'd in power:

31

The avenue before its ruin'd gate,
Which when the Castle, suffering less from time
Than havoc, hath foregone its strength and state,
Uninjured flourisheth in nature's prime;
To us a grateful shade did it supply,
Glad of that shelter from the noontide sky:

32

The quarries deep, where many a massive block
For some Parisian monument of pride
Hewn with long labour from the granite rock,
Lay in the change of fortune cast aside;
But rightly with those stones should Prussia build
Her monumental pile on Ligny's bloody field!

33

The wealthy village bearing but too plain
The dismal marks of recent fire and spoil;
Its decent habitants, an active train,
And many a one at work with needful toil
On roof or thatch, the ruin to repair, . .
May never War repeat such devastation there!

34

Ill had we done if we had hurried by
A scene in faithful history to be famed
Through long succeeding ages; nor may I
The hospitality let pass unnamed,

And courteous kindness on that distant ground,
Which, strangers as we were, for England's sake we found.

35

And dear to England should be Ligny's name.
Prussia and England both were proved that day;
Each generous nation to the other's fame
Her ample tribute of applause will pay;
Long as the memory of those labours past,
Unbroken may their Fair Alliance last!

36

The tales which of that field I could unfold
Better it is that silence should conceal.
They who had seen them shudder'd while they told
Of things so hideous; and they cried with zeal,
One man hath caused all this, of men the worst, . .
O wherefore have ye spared his head accurst!

37

It fits not now to tell our farther way
Through many a scene by bounteous nature blest,
Nor how we found, where'er our journey lay,
An Englishman was still an honour'd guest;
But still upon this point, where'er we went,
The indignant voice was heard of discontent.

38

And hence there lay, too plainly might we see,
An ominous feeling upon every heart:
What hope of lasting order could there be,
They said, where Justice has not had her part?
Wisdom doth rule with Justice by her side;
Justice from Wisdom none may e'er divide.

39

The shaken mind felt all things insecure:
Accustom'd long to see successful crimes,
And helplessly the heavy yoke endure,
They now look'd back upon their fathers' times,
Ere the wild rule of Anarchy began,
As to some happier world, or golden age of man.

40

As they who in the vale of years advance,
And the dark eve is closing on their way,
When on their mind the recollections glance
Of early joy, and Hope's delightful day,
Behold, in brighter hues than those of truth,
The light of morning on the fields of youth:

41

Those who amid these troubles had grown grey
Recurr'd with mournful feeling to the past;
Blest had we known our blessings, they would say,
We were not worthy that our bliss should last!
Peaceful we were, and flourishing and free,
But madly we required more liberty!

42

Remorseless France had long oppress'd the land,
And for her frantic projects drain'd its blood;
And now they felt the Prussian's heavy hand:
He came to aid them; bravely had he stood
In their defence; . . but oh! in peace how ill
The soldier's deeds, how insolent his will!

43

One general wish prevail'd, . . if they might see
The happy order of old times restored!
Give them their former laws and liberty,
This their desires and secret prayers implored; . .
Forgetful, as the stream of time flows on,
That that which passes is for ever gone.

PART II

THE VISION

ΕΠΕΧΕ ΝΥΝ ΣΚΟΠΩ ΤΟΞΟΝ, ΑΓΕ ΘΥΜΕ.—PINDAR.

I. THE TOWER

1

I THOUGHT upon these things in solitude,
And mused upon them in the silent night;
The open graves, the recent scene of blood,
Were present to the soul's creative sight;
These mournful images my mind possess'd,
And mingled with the visions of my rest.

2

Methought that I was travelling o'er a plain
Whose limits, far beyond all reach of sense,
The aching anxious sight explored in vain.
How I came there I could not tell, nor whence;
Nor where my melancholy journey lay;
Only that soon the night would close upon my way.

3

Behind me was a dolorous, dreary scene,
With huge and mouldering ruins widely spread;
Wastes which had whilome fertile regions been,
Tombs which had lost all record of the dead;
And where the dim horizon seem'd to close,
Far off the gloomy Pyramids arose.

4

Full fain would I have known what lay before,
But lifted there in vain my mortal eye;
That point with cloud and mist was cover'd o'er,
As though the earth were mingled with the sky.
Yet thither, as some power unseen impell'd,
My blind involuntary way I held.

5

Across the plain innumerable crowds
Like me were on their destined journey bent,
Toward the land of shadows and of clouds:
One pace they travelled, to one point they went; . .
A motley multitude of old and young,
Men of all climes and hues, and every tongue.

6

Ere long I came upon a field of dead,
Where heaps of recent carnage fill'd the way;
A ghastly sight, . . nor was there where to tread,
So thickly slaughter'd, horse and man, they lay.
Methought that in that place of death I knew
Again the late-seen field of Waterloo.

7

Troubled I stood, and doubtful where to go, . .
A cold damp shuddering ran through all my frame;
Fain would I fly from that dread scene, when lo!
A voice as from above pronounced my name;
And, looking to the sound, by the way-side
I saw a lofty structure edified.

8

Most like it seem'd to that aspiring Tower
Which old Ambition rear'd on Babel's plain,
As if he ween'd in his presumptuous power
To scale high Heaven with daring pride profane;
Such was its giddy height: and round and round
The spiral steps in long ascension wound.

9

Its frail foundations upon sand were placed,
And round about it mouldering rubbish lay;
For easily by time and storms defaced
The loose materials crumbled in decay:
Rising so high, and built so insecure,
Ill might such perishable work endure.

10

I not the less went up, and, as I drew
Toward the top, more firm the structure seem'd,
With nicer art composed, and fair to view:
Strong and well-built perchance I might have deem'd
The pile, had I not seen and understood
Of what frail matter form'd, and on what base it stood.

11

There on the summit a grave personage
Received and welcomed me in courteous guise;
On his grey temples were the marks of age,
As one whom years methought should render wise.
I saw that thou wert fill'd with doubt and fear,
He said, and therefore have I call'd thee here.

12

Hence from this eminence sublime I see
The wanderings of the erring crowd below,
And, pitying thee in thy perplexity,
Will tell thee all that thou canst need to know
To guide thy steps aright. I bent my head
As if in thanks, . . And who art thou? I said.

13

He answer'd, I am Wisdom. Mother Earth
Me, in her vigour self-conceiving, bore;
And, as from eldest time I date my birth,
Eternally with her shall I endure;
Her noblest offspring I, to whom alone
The course of sublunary things is known.

14

Master! quoth I, regarding him, I thought
That Wisdom was the child divine of Heaven.
So, he replied, have fabling preachers taught,
And the dull World a light belief hath given.
But vainly would these fools my claim decry, . .
Wisdom I am, and of the Earth am I.

15

Thus while he spake I scann'd his features well:
Small but audacious was the Old Man's eye;
His countenance was hard, and seem'd to tell
Of knowledge less than of effrontery.
Instruct me then, I said, for thou should'st know,
From whence I came, and whither I must go.

16

Art thou then one who would his mind perplex
With knowledge bootless even if attain'd?
Fond man! he answer'd; . . wherefore shouldst thou vex
Thy heart with seeking what may not be gain'd!
Regard not what has been, nor what may be,
O Child of Earth, this Now is all that toucheth thee!

17

He who performs the journey of to-day
Cares not if yesterday were shower or sun:
To-morrow let the heavens be what they may,
And what recks he? . . his wayfare will be done.
Heedless of what hereafter may befall,
Live whilst thou livest, for this life is all!

18

I kept my rising indignation down,
That I might hear what farther he would teach;
Yet on my darken'd brow the instinctive frown,
Gathering at that abominable speech,
Maintain'd its place: he mark'd it and pursued,
Tuning his practised tongue to subtle flattery's mood:

19

Do I not know thee, . . that from earliest youth
Knowledge hath been thy only heart's-desire?
Here seeing all things as they are in truth,
I show thee all to which thy thoughts aspire:
No vapours here impede the exalted sense,
Nor mists of earth attain this eminence.

20

Whither thy way, thou askest me, and what
The region dark whereto thy footsteps tend,
And where by one inevitable lot
The course of all yon multitude must end.
Take thou this glass, whose perfect power shall aid
Thy faulty vision, and therewith explore the shade.

21

Eager I look'd; but, seeing with surprize
That the same darkness still the view o'erspread,
Half angrily I turn'd away mine eyes.
Complacent then the Old Man smiled and said,
Darkness is all! what more wouldst thou descry?
Rest now content, for farther none can spy.

22

Now mark me, Child of Earth! he thus pursued;
Let not the hypocrites thy reason blind,
And to the quest of some unreal good
Divert with dogmas vain thine erring mind:
Learn thou, whate'er the motive they may call,
That Pleasure is the aim, and Self the spring of all.

23

This is the root of knowledge. Wise are they
Who to this guiding principle attend;
They, as they press along the world's high-way,
With single aim pursue their steady end:
No vain compunction checks their sure career;
No idle dreams deceive; their heart is here.

24

They from the nature and the fate of man,
Thus clearly understood, derive their strength;
Knowing that, as from nothing they began,
To nothing they must needs return at length;
This knowledge steels the heart and clears the mind,
And they create on earth the Heaven they find.

25

Such, I made answer, was the Tyrant's creed
Who bruised the nations with his iron rod,
Till on yon field the wretch received his meed
From Britain, and the outstretch'd arm of God!
Behold him now, . . Death ever in his view,
The only change for him, . . and Judgment to ensue!

26

Behold him when the unbidden thoughts arise
Of his old passions and unbridled power;
As the fierce tiger in confinement lies,
And dreams of blood that he must taste no more, . .
Then, waking in that appetite of rage,
Frets to and fro within his narrow cage.

27

Hath he not chosen well? the Old Man replied;
Bravely he aim'd at universal sway;
And never earthly Chief was glorified
Like this Napoleon in his prosperous day.
All-ruling Fate itself hath not the power
To alter what has been: and he has had his hour!

28

Take him, I answer'd, at his fortune's flood;
Russia his friend, the Austrian wars surceased,
When Kings, his creatures some, and some subdued,
Like vassals waited at his marriage feast;
And Europe like a map before him lay,
Of which he gave at will, or took away.

29

Call then to mind Navarre's heroic chief,
Wandering by night and day through wood and glen,
His country's sufferings like a private grief
Wringing his heart: would Mina even
Those perils and that sorrow have foregone
To be that Tyrant on his prosperous throne?

30

But wherefore name I him whose arm was free?
A living hope his noble heart sustain'd,
A faith which bade him through all dangers see
The triumph his enduring country gain'd.
See Hofer with no earthly hope to aid, . .
His country lost, himself to chains and death betray'd!

31

By those he served deserted in his need;
Given to the unrelenting Tyrant's power,
And by his mean revenge condemn'd to bleed, . .
Would he have barter'd in that aweful hour
His heart, his conscience, and his sure renown,
For the malignant murderer's crimes and crown?

32

Him too, I know, a worthy thought of fame
In that dread trance upheld; . . the foresight sure
That in his own dear country his good name
Long as the streams and mountains should endure;
The herdsmen on the hills should sing his praise,
And children learn his deeds through all succeeding days.

33

Turn we to those in whom no glorious thought
Lent its strong succour to the passive mind;
Nor stirring enterprize within them wrought; . .
Who, to their lot of bitterness resign'd,
Endured their sorrows by the world unknown,
And look'd for their reward to Death alone:

34

Mothers within Gerona's leager'd wall,
Who saw their famish'd children pine and die; . .
Widows surviving Zaragoza's fall
To linger in abhorr'd captivity; . .
Yet would not have exchanged their sacred woe
For all the empire of their miscreant foe!

35

Serene the Old Man replied, and smiled with scorn, [wear
Behold the effect of error! thus to
The days of miserable life forlorn,
Struggling with evil and consum'd with care; . .
Poor fools, whom vain and empty hopes mislead! [meed.
They reap their sufferings for their only

36

O false one! I exclaim'd, whom canst thou fool
With such gross sophisms, but the wicked heart?
The pupils of thine own unhappy school
Are they who chuse the vain and empty part;
How oft in age, in sickness, and in woe,
Have they complain'd that all was vanity below!

37

Look at that mighty Gaznevide, Mahmood,
When, pining in his Palace of Delight,
He bade the gather'd spoils of realms subdued [sight,
Be spread before him to regale his
Whate'er the Orient boasts of rich and rare, . .
And then he wept to think what toys they were!

38

Look at the Russian minion when he play'd
With pearls and jewels which surpass'd all price;
And now apart their various hues array'd, [nice,
Blended their colours now in union
Then weary of the baubles, with a sigh,
Swept them aside, and thought that all was vanity!

39

Wean'd by the fatal Messenger from pride,
The Syrian through the streets exposed his shroud; [wide
And one that ravaged kingdoms far and
Upon the bed of sickness cried aloud,
What boots my empire in this mortal throe,
For the grave calls me now, and I must go!

40

Thus felt these wretched men, because decay
Had touch'd them in their vitals; Death stood by;
And Reason when the props of flesh gave way, [eye.
Purged as with euphrasy the mortal
Who seeks for worldly honours, wealth or power,
Will find them vain indeed at that dread hour!

41

These things are vain; but all things are not so,
The virtues and the hopes of human kind! . .
Yea, by the God who, ordering all below, [mind,
In his own image made the immortal
Desires there are which draw from Him their birth,
And bring forth lasting fruits for Heaven and Earth.

42

Therefore, through evil and through good content,
The righteous man performs his part assign'd; [spent,
In bondage lingering, or with suffering
Therefore doth peace support the heroic mind;
And from the dreadful sacrifice of all
Meek woman doth not shrink at Duty's call.

43

Therefore the Martyr clasps the stake in faith,
And sings thanksgiving while the flames aspire;
Victorious over agony and death,
Sublime he stands and triumphs in the fire,
As though to him Elijah's lot were given,
And that the Chariot and the steeds of Heaven.

II. THE EVIL PROPHET

1

With that my passionate discourse I brake;
Too fast the thought, too strong the feeling came.
Composed the Old Man listen'd while I spake,
Nor moved to wrath, nor capable of shame;
And, when I ceased, unalter'd was his mien,
His hard eye unabash'd, his front serene.

2

Hard is it error from the mind to weed,
He answer'd, where it strikes so deep a root.
Let us to other argument proceed,
And, if we may, discover what the fruit
Of this long strife, . . what harvest of great good
The World shall reap for all this cost of blood!

3

Assuming then a frown as thus he said,
He stretch'd his hand from that commanding height,
Behold, quoth he, where thrice ten thousand dead
Are laid, the victims of a single fight!
And thrice ten thousand more at Ligny lie,
Slain for the prelude to this tragedy!

4

This but a page of the great book of war, . .
A drop amid the sea of human woes! . .
Thou canst remember when the morning Star
Of Freedom on rejoicing France arose,
Over her vine-clad hills and regions gay,
Fair even as Phosphor who foreruns the day.

5

Such and so beautiful that Star's uprise;
But soon the glorious dawn was overcast:
A baleful track it held across the skies,
Till now through all its fatal changes past,
Its course fulfill'd, its aspects understood,
On Waterloo it hath gone down in blood.

6

Where now the hopes with which thine ardent youth
Rejoicingly to run its race began?
Where now the reign of Liberty and Truth,
The Rights Omnipotent of Equal Man,
The principles should make all discord cease,
And bid poor humankind repose at length in peace?

7

Behold the Bourbon to that throne by force
Restored, from whence by fury he was cast:
Thus to the point where it began its course
The melancholy cycle comes at last;
And what are all the intermediate years? . .
What, but a bootless waste of blood and tears?

8

The peace which thus at Waterloo ye won,
Shall it endure with this exasperate foe?
In gratitude for all that ye have done
Will France her ancient enmity forego?
Her wounded spirit, her envenom'd will
Ye know, . . and ample means are left her still.

9

What though the tresses of her strength be shorn,
The roots remain untouch'd; and, as of old
The bondsman Samson felt his power return
To his knit sinews, so shall ye behold
France, like a giant fresh from sleep, arise
And rush upon her slumbering enemies.

10

Woe then for Belgium! for this ill-doom'd land,
The theatre of strife through every age!
Look from this eminence whereon we stand, . . [stage
What is the region round us but a
For the mad pastime of Ambition made,
Whereon War's dreadful drama may be play'd?

11

Thus hath it been from history's earliest light,
When yonder by the Sabis Cæsar stood, [fight,
And saw his legions, raging from the
Root out the noble nation they subdued; [there
Even at this day the peasant findeth
The relics of that ruthless massacre.

12

Need I recall the long religious strife?
Or William's hard-fought fields? or Marlborough's fame
Here purchased at such lavish price of life, . .
Or Fontenoy, or Fleurus' later name?
Wherever here the foot of man may tread,
The blood of man hath on that spot been shed.

13

Shall then Futurity a happier train
Unfold, than this dark picture of the past?
Dream'st thou again of some Saturnian reign, [last?
Or that this ill-compacted realm should
Its wealth and weakness to the foe are known,
And the first shock subverts its baseless throne.

14

O wretched country, better should thy soil
Be laid again beneath the invading seas,
Thou goodliest masterpiece of human toil,
If still thou must be doom'd to scenes like these!
O Destiny inexorable and blind!
O miserable lot of poor mankind!

15

Saying thus, he fix'd on me a searching eye
Of stern regard, as if my heart to reach:
Yet gave he now no leisure to reply;
For, ere I might dispose my thoughts for speech,
The Old Man, as one who felt and understood
His strength, the theme of his discourse pursued.

16

If we look farther, what shall we behold
But everywhere the swelling seeds of ill,
Half-smother'd fires, and causes manifold
Of strife to come; the powerful watching still
For fresh occasion to enlarge his power,
The weak and injured waiting for their hour!

17

Will the rude Cossack with his spoils bear back
The love of peace and humanizing art?
Think ye the mighty Moscovite shall lack
Some specious business for the ambitious heart;
Or the black Eagle, when she moults her plume,
The form and temper of the Dove assume?

18

From the old Germanic chaos hath there risen
A happier order of establish'd things?
And is the Italian Mind from papal prison
Set free to soar upon its native wings?
Or look to Spain, and let her Despot tell
If there thy high-raised hopes are answer'd well!

19

At that appeal my spirit breathed a groan,
But he triumphantly pursued his speech:
O Child of Earth, he cried with loftier tone, [teach;
The present and the past one lesson
Look where thou wilt, the history of man
Is but a thorny maze, without a plan!

20

The winds which have in viewless heaven their birth,
The waves which in their fury meet the clouds, [earth,
The central storms which shake the solid
And from volcanoes burst in fiery floods, [blind,
Are not more vague and purportless and
Than is the course of things among mankind!

21

Rash hands unravel what the wise have spun;
Realms which in story fill so large a part,
Rear'd by the strong are by the weak undone;
Barbarians overthrow the works of art,
And what force spares is sapp'd by sure decay, . .
So earthly things are changed and pass away.

22

And think not thou thy England hath a spell, [elude;
That she this general fortune should
Easier to crush the foreign foe, than quell
The malice which misleads the multitude,
And that dread malady of erring zeal,
Which like a cancer eats into the commonweal.

23

The fabric of her power is undermined;
The earthquake underneath it will have way
And all that glorious structure, as the wind [away:
Scatters a summer cloud, be swept
For Destiny on this terrestrial ball
Drives on her iron car, and crushes all.

24

Thus as he ended, his mysterious form
Enlarged, grew dim, and vanish'd from my view.
At once on all sides rush'd the gather'd storm,
The thunders roll'd around, the wild winds blew,
And, as the tempest round the summit beat,
The whole frail fabric shook beneath my feet.

III. THE SACRED MOUNTAIN

1

But then methought I heard a voice exclaim,
Hither, my Son, Oh, hither take thy flight!
A heavenly voice which call'd me by my name,
And bade me hasten from that treacherous height:
The voice it was which I was wont to hear,
Sweet as a Mother's to her infant's ear.

2

I hesitated not, but at the call
Sprung from the summit of that tottering tower.
There is a motion known in dreams to all,
When, buoyant by some self-sustaining power,
Through air we seem to glide, as if set free
From all encumbrance of mortality.

3

Thus borne aloft I reach'd the Sacred Hill, [behind :
And left the scene of tempests far
But that old tempter's parting language still [mind ;
Press'd like a painful burthen on my
The troubled soul had lost her inward light, [Night.
And all within was black as Erebus and

4

The Thoughts which I had known in youth return'd,
But, oh, how changed ! a sad and spectral train :
And, while for all the miseries past I mourn'd,
And for the lives which had been given in vain,
In sorrow and in fear I turn'd mine eye
From the dark aspects of futurity.

5

I sought the thickest woodland's shade profound,
As suited best my melancholy mood,
And cast myself upon the gloomy ground ;
When lo ! a gradual radiance fill'd the wood ;
A heavenly presence rose upon my view,
And in that form divine the aweful Muse I knew.

6

Hath then that Spirit false perplex'd thy heart,
O thou of little faith ! severe she cried.
Bear with me, Goddess, heavenly as thou art, [plied,
Bear with my earthly nature ! I re-
And let me pour into thine ear my grief :
Thou canst enlighten, thou canst give relief.

7

The ploughshare had gone deep, the sower's hand
Had scatter'd in the open soil the grain ; [land ;
The harrow too had well prepared the
I look'd to see the fruit of all this pain ! . .

Alas ! the thorns and old inveterate weed
Have sprung again, and stifled the good seed.

8

I hoped that Italy should break her chains,
Foreign and papal, with the world's applause,
Knit in firm union her divided reigns,
And rear a well-built pile of equal laws :
Then might the wrongs of Venice be forgiven,
And joy should reach Petrarca's soul in Heaven.

9

I hoped that that abhorr'd Idolatry
Had in the strife received its mortal wound :
The Souls which from beneath the Altar cry,
At length, I thought, had their just vengeance found ; . .
In purple and in scarlet clad, behold
The Harlot sits, adorn'd with gems and gold !

10

The golden cup she bears full to the brim
Of her abominations as of yore !
Her eyeballs with inebriate triumph swim ;
Though drunk with righteous blood, she thirsts for more,
Eager to reassert her influence fell,
And once again let loose the Dogs of Hell.

11

Woe for that people too who by their path
For these late triumphs first made plain the way ;
Whom in the Valley of the Shade of Death
No fears nor fiery sufferings could dismay :
Art could not tempt, nor violence enthrall
Their firm devotion, faithful found through all.

12

Strange race of haughty heart and stubborn will,
Slavery they love and chains with pride they wear;
Inflexible alike in good or ill,
The inveterate stamp of servitude they bear.
Oh fate perverse, to see all change withstood,
There only where all change must needs be good!

13

But them no foe can force, nor friend persuade;
Impassive souls in iron forms inclosed,
As though of human mould they were not made,
But of some sterner elements composed,
Against offending nations to be sent,
The ruthless ministers of punishment.

14

Where are those Minas after that career
Wherewith all Europe rang from side to side?
In exile wandering! Where the Mountaineer, . .
Late, like Pelayo, the Asturian's pride?
Had Ferdinand no mercy for that life,
Exposed so long for him in daily, . . hourly strife!

15

From her Athenian orator of old
Greece never listen'd to sublimer strain
Than that with which, for truth and freedom bold,
Quintana moved the inmost soul of Spain.
What meed is his let Ferdinand declare . .
Chains, and the silent dungeon, and despair!

16

For this hath England borne so brave a part!
Spent with endurance, or in battle [slain,
Is it for this so many an English heart
Lies mingled with the insensate soil of Spain!
Is this the issue, this the happy birth
In those long throes and that strong agony brought forth!

17

And oh! if England's fatal hour draw nigh, . .
If that most glorious edifice should fall
By the wild hands of bestial Anarchy, . .
Then might it seem that He who ordereth all
Doth take for sublunary things no care: . .
The burthen of that thought is more than I can bear.

18

Even as a mother listens to her child,
My plaint the Muse divine benignant heard,
Then answer'd in reproving accents mild,
What if thou seest the fruit of hope deferr'd,
Dost thou for this in faltering faith repine?
A manlier, wiser virtue should be thine!

19

Ere the good seed can give its fruit in Spain,
The light must shine on that bedarken'd land,
And Italy must break her papal chain,
Ere the soil answer to the sower's hand;
For, till the sons their fathers' fault repent,
The old error brings its direful punishment.

20

Hath not experience bade the wise man see
Poor hope from innovations premature?
All sudden change is ill; slow grows the tree
Which in its strength through ages shall endure.
In that ungrateful earth it long may lie
Dormant, but fear not that the seed should die.

21

Falsely that Tempter taught thee that the past
Was but a blind inextricable maze;
Falsely he taught that evil overcast
With gathering tempests these propitious days,
That he in subtle snares thy soul might bind,
And rob thee of thy hopes for humankind.

22

He told thee the beginning and the end
Were indistinguishable all, and dark;
And, when from his vain Tower he bade thee bend
Thy curious eye, well knew he that no spark
Of heavenly light would reach the baffled sense,
The mists of earth lay round him all too dense.

23

Must I, as thou hadst chosen the evil part,
Tell thee that Man is free and God is good? [heart:
These primal truths are rooted in thy
But these, being rightly felt and understood,
Should bring with them a hope, calm, constant, sure,
Patient, and on the rock of faith secure.

24

The Monitress Divine, as thus she spake,
Induced me gently on, ascending still,
And thus emerging from that mournful brake
We drew toward the summit of the hill, [fair
And reach'd a green and sunny place, so
As well with long-lost Eden might compare.

25

Broad cedars grew around that lovely glade;
Exempted from decay, and never sere,
Their wide-spread boughs diffused a fragrant shade;
The cypress incorruptible was here,
With fluted stem and head aspiring high,
Nature's proud column, pointing to the sky.

26

There too the vigorous olive in its pride,
As in its own Apulian soil uncheck'd,
Tower'd high, and spread its glaucous foliage wide:
With liveliest hues the mead beneath was deck'd,
Gift of that grateful tree that with its root
Repays the earth from whence it feeds its fruit.

27

There too the sacred bay of brighter green
Exalted its rejoicing head on high;
And there the martyr's holier palm was seen
Waving its plumage as the breeze went by.
All fruits which ripen under genial skies
Grew there as in another Paradise.

28

And over all that lovely glade there grew
All wholesome roots and plants of healing power;
The herb of grace, the medicinal rue,
The poppy rich in worth as gay in flower;
The hearts-ease that delighteth every eye,
And sage divine and virtuous euphrasy.

29

Unwounded here Judæa's balm distill'd
Its precious juice; the snowy jasmine here
Spread its luxuriant tresses wide, and fill'd
With fragrance the delicious atmosphere!
More piercing still did orange-flowers dispense
From golden groves the purest joy of sense.

30

As low it lurk'd the tufted moss between,
The violet there its modest perfume shed,
Like humble virtue, rather felt than seen:
And here the Rose of Sharon rear'd its head,
The glory of all flowers, to sense and sight
Yielding their full contentment of delight.

31

A gentle river wound its quiet way
Through this sequester'd glade, meandering wide;
Smooth as a mirror here the surface lay,
Where the pure lotus, floating in its pride,
Enjoy'd the breath of heaven, the sun's warm beam,
And the cool freshness of its native [stream.

32

Here o'er green weeds, whose tresses waved outspread,
With silent lapse the glassy waters [run;
Here in fleet motion o'er a pebbly bed
Gliding they glance and ripple to the sun;
The stirring breeze that swept them in its flight
Raised on the stream a shower of sparkling light.

33

And all sweet birds sung there their lays of love;
The mellow thrush, the black-bird loud and shrill,
The rapturous nightingale that shook the grove,
Made the ears vibrate and the heart-strings thrill;
The ambitious lark, that, soaring in the [sky,
Pour'd forth her lyric strain of ecstasy.

34

Sometimes, when that wild chorus intermits,
The linnet's song was heard amid the trees,
A low sweet voice; and sweeter still, at fits,
The ring-dove's wooing came upon the [breeze;
While with the wind which moved the leaves among,
The murmuring waters join'd in under-song.

35

The hare disported here and fear'd no ill,
For never evil thing that glade came nigh;
The sheep were free to wander at their [will,
As needing there no earthly shepherd's eye;
The bird sought no concealment for her nest,
So perfect was the peace wherewith those bowers were blest.

36

All blending thus with all in one delight,
The soul was soothed and satisfied and fill'd:
This mingled bliss of sense and sound and sight
The flow of boisterous mirth might there have still'd,
And, sinking in the gentle spirit deep,
Have touch'd those strings of joy which make us weep.

37

Even thus in earthly gardens had it been,
If earthly gardens might with these compare;
But more than all such influences, I ween
There was a heavenly virtue in the air,
Which laid all vain perplexing thoughts to rest,
And heal'd and calm'd and purified the breast.

38

Then said I to that guide divine, My soul
When here we enter'd, was o'ercharged with grief,
For evil doubts which I could not controul
Beset my troubled spirit. This relief, . .
This change, . . whence are they? Almost it might seem
I never lived till now; . . all else had been a dream.

39

My heavenly Teacher answer'd, Say not *seem* ; . .
In this place all things *are* what they appear ;
And they who feel the past a feverish dream
Wake to reality on entering here.
These waters are the Well of Life, and lo!
The Rock of Ages there, from whence they flow.

40

Saying thus we came upon an inner glade,
The holiest place that human eyes might see ;
For all that vale was like a temple made
By Nature's hand, and this the sanctuary ;
Where in its bed of living rock, the Rood
Of Man's redemption, firmly planted, stood.

41

And at its foot the never-failing Well
Of Life profusely flow'd that all might drink.
Most blessed Water! Neither tongue can tell
The blessedness thereof, nor heart can think,
Save only those to whom it hath been given
To taste of that divinest gift of Heaven.

42

There grew a goodly Tree this Well beside ; . . [here,
Behold a branch from Eden planted
Pluck'd from the Tree of Knowledge, said my guide.
O Child of Adam, put away thy fear, . .
In thy first father's grave it hath its root;
Taste thou the bitter, but the wholesome fruit.

43

In awe I heard, and trembled, and obey'd :
The bitterness was even as of death ;
I felt a cold and piercing thrill pervade
My loosen'd limbs, and, losing sight and breath,
To earth I should have fallen in my despair,
Had I not clasp'd the Cross and been supported there.

44

My heart, I thought, was bursting with the force
Of that most fatal fruit ; soul-sick I felt,
And tears ran down in such continuous course,
As if the very eyes themselves should melt. [say,
But then I heard my heavenly Teacher
Drink, and this mortal stound will pass away.

45

I stoopt and drank of that divinest Well,
Fresh from the Rock of Ages where it ran ;
It had a heavenly quality to quell
My pain : . . I rose a renovated man,
And would not now, when that relief was known,
For worlds the needful suffering have foregone.

46

Even as the Eagle, (ancient storyers say),
When faint with years she feels her flagging wing,
Soars up toward the mid sun's piercing ray,
Then fill'd with fire into some living spring
Plunges, and, casting there her aged plumes,
The vigorous strength of primal youth resumes :

47

Such change in me that blessed Water wrought ;
The bitterness, which from its fatal root
The Tree derived with painful healing fraught,
Pass'd clean away ; and in its place the fruit
Produced by virtue of that wondrous wave
The savour which in Paradise it gave.

48

Now, said the heavenly Muse, thou mayst advance,
Fitly prepared toward the mountain's height.
O Child of Man, this necessary trance
Hath purified from flaw thy mortal sight,
That with scope unconfined of vision free
Thou the beginning and the end mayst see.

49

She took me by the hand and on we went,
Hope urged me forward and my soul was strong;
With winged speed we scaled the steep ascent,
Nor seem'd the labour difficult or long,
Ere on the summit of the sacred hill
Upraised I stood, where I might gaze my fill.

50

Below me lay, unfolded like a scroll,
The boundless region where I wander'd late,
Where I might see realms spread and oceans roll,
And mountains from their cloud-surmounting state
Dwarf'd like a map beneath the excursive sight,
So ample was the range from that commanding height.

51

Eastward with darkness round on every side
An eye of light was in the farthest sky.
Lo, the beginning! . . said my heavenly Guide;
The steady ray, which there thou canst descry,
Comes from lost Eden, from the primal land
Of man 'waved over by the fiery brand'.

52

Look now toward the end! no mists obscure,
Nor clouds will there impede the strengthen'd sight;
Unblench'd thine eye the vision may endure.
I look'd, . . surrounded with effulgent light
More glorious than all glorious hues of even,
The Angel Death stood there in the open Gate of Heaven.

IV. THE HOPES OF MAN

1

Now, said my heavenly Teacher, all is clear! . .
Bear the Beginning and the End in mind,
The course of human things will then appear
Beneath its proper laws; and thou wilt find,
Through all their seeming labyrinth, the plan
Which 'vindicates the ways of God to Man'.

2

Free choice doth Man possess of good or ill,
All were but mockery else. From Wisdom's way
Too oft perverted by the tainted will
Is his rebellious nature drawn astray;
Therefore an inward monitor is given,
A voice that answers to the law of Heaven.

3

Frail as he is, and as an infant weak,
The knowledge of his weakness is his strength;
For succour is vouchsafed to those who seek
In humble faith sincere; and, when at length
Death sets the disembodied spirit free,
According to their deeds their lot shall be.

4

Thus, should the chance of private fortune raise
A transitory doubt, Death answers all.
And in the scale of nations, if the ways
Of Providence mysterious we may call,
Yet, rightly view'd, all history doth impart
Comfort and hope and strength to the believing heart.

5

For through the lapse of ages may the course
Of moral good progressive still be seen,
Though mournful dynasties of Fraud and Force,
Dark Vice and purblind Ignorance intervene;
Empires and Nations rise, decay and fall,
But still the Good survives and perseveres thro' all.

6

Yea, even in those most lamentable times,
When, every where to wars and woes a prey,
Earth seem'd but one wide theatre of crimes,
Good unperceived had work'd its silent way,
And all those dread convulsions did but clear
The obstructed path to give it free career.

7

But deem not thou some over-ruling Fate,
Directing all things with benign decree,
Through all the turmoil of this mortal state,
Appoints that what is best shall therefore be;
Even as from man his future doom proceeds,
So nations rise or fall according to their deeds.

8

Light at the first was given to human kind,
And Law was written in the human heart.
If they forsake the Light, perverse of mind,
And wilfully prefer the evil part,
Then to their own devices are they left,
By their own choice of Heaven's support bereft.

9

The individual culprit may sometimes
Unpunish'd to his after reckoning go:
Not thus collective man, . . for public crimes
Draw on their proper punishment below;
When Nations go astray, from age to age
The effects remain, a fatal heritage.

10

Bear witness, Egypt, thy huge monuments
Of priestly fraud and tyranny austere!
Bear witness, thou whose only name presents
All holy feelings to religion dear, . .
In Earth's dark circlet once the precious gem
Of living light, . . O fallen Jerusalem!

11

See barbarous Africa, on every side
To error, wretchedness, and crimes resign'd!
Behold the vicious Orient, far and wide
Enthrall'd in slavery! As the human mind
Corrupts and goes to wreck, Earth sickens there,
And the contagion taints the ambient air.

12

They had the Light, and from the Light they turn'd;
What marvel if they grope in darkness lost?
They had the Law; . . God's natural law they scorn'd,
And, chusing error, thus they pay the cost!
Wherever Falsehood and Oppression reign,
There degradation follows in their train

13

What then in these late days had Europe been, . .
This moral, intellectual heart of earth, . . [sin
From which the nations who lie dead in
Should one day yet receive their second birth, . .
To what had she been sunk, if brutal Force
Had taken unrestrain'd its impious course!

14

The Light had been extinguish'd, . . this be sure
The first wise aim of conscious Tyranny,
Which knows it may not with the Light endure:
But where Light is not, Freedom cannot be; [is;'
'Where Freedom is not, there no Virtue
Where Virtue is not, there no Happiness.

15

If among hateful Tyrants of all times
For endless execration handed down
One may be found surpassing all in crimes,
One that for infamy should bear the crown,
Napoleon is that man, in guilt the first,
Pre-eminently bad among the worst.

16

For not, like Scythian conquerors, did he tread
From his youth up the common path of blood; [bred
Nor like some Eastern Tyrant was he
In sensual harems, ignorant of good; . .
Their vices from the circumstance have grown,
His by deliberate purpose were his own.

17

Not led away by circumstance he err'd,
But from the wicked heart his error came: [ferr'd,
By Fortune to the highest place pre-
He sought through evil means an evil aim,
And all his ruthless measures were design'd
To enslave, degrade, and brutalize mankind.

. .

18

Some barbarous dream of empire to fulfil,
Those iron ages he would have restored,
When Law was but the ruffian soldier's will,
Might govern'd all, the sceptre was the sword,
And Peace, not elsewhere finding where to dwell,
Sought a sad refuge in the convent-cell.

19

Too far had he succeeded! In his mould
An evil generation had been framed,
By no religion temper'd or controul'd,
By foul examples of all crimes inflamed,
Of faith, of honour, of compassion void; . .
Such were the fitting agents he employ'd.

20

Believing as yon lying Spirit taught,
They to that vain philosophy held fast,
And trusted that, as they began from nought,
To nothing they should needs return at last;
Hence no restraint of conscience, no remorse,
But every baleful passion took its course.

21

And, had they triumph'd, Earth had once again,
To Violence subdued, and impious Pride,
Verged to such state of wickedness, as when
The Giantry of old their God defied,
And Heaven, impatient of a world like this,
Open'd its flood-gates, and broke up the abyss.

22

That danger is gone by. On Waterloo
The Tyrant's fortune in the scale was weigh'd, . .
His fortune and the World's, . . and England threw
Her sword into the balance . . down it sway'd;
And, when in battle first he met that foe,
There he received his mortal overthrow.

23

O my brave Countrymen, with that I said,
For then my heart with transport overflow'd,
O Men of England! nobly have ye paid
The debt which to your ancestors ye owed,
And gather'd for your children's heritage
A glory that shall last from age to age!

24

And we did well, when on our Mountain's height
For Waterloo we raised the festal flame,
And in our triumph taught the startled night [name,
To ring with Wellington's victorious
Making the far-off mariner admire
To see the crest of Skiddaw plumed with fire.

25

The Moon, who had in silence visited
His lonely summit from the birth of time,
That hour an unavailing splendour shed,
Lost in the effulgence of the flame sublime, [stood,
In whose broad blaze rejoicingly we
And all below a depth of blackest solitude.

26

Fit theatre for this great joy we chose;
For never since above the abating Flood
Emerging, first that pinnacle arose,
Had cause been given for deeper gratitude,
For prouder joy to every English heart,
When England had so well perform'd her arduous part.

27

The Muse replied with gentle smile benign, . .
Well mayst thou praise the land that gave thee birth,
And bless the Fate which made that country thine;
For of all ages and all parts of earth
To chuse thy time and place did Fate allow,
Wise choice would be this England and this Now.

28

From bodily and mental bondage there
Hath Man his full emancipation gain'd;
The viewless and illimitable air
Is not more free than Thought; all unrestrain'd,
Nor pined in want, nor sunk in sensual sloth,
There may the immortal Mind attain its growth.

29

There under Freedom's tutelary wing,
Deliberate Courage fears no human foe;
There, undefiled as in their native spring,
The living waters of Religion flow;
There like a beacon the transmitted Light
Conspicuous to all nations burneth bright.

30

The virtuous will she hath, which should aspire
To spread the sphere of happiness and light;
She hath the power to answer her desire,
The wisdom to direct her power aright;
The will, the power, the wisdom thus combined,
What glorious prospects open on mankind!

31

Behold! she cried, and lifting up her hand,
The shaping elements obey'd her will; . .
A vapour gather'd round our lofty stand,
Roll'd in thick volumes o'er the Sacred Hill,
Descending then, its surges far and near
Fill'd all the wide subjacent atmosphere.

32

As I have seen from Skiddaw's stony height
The fleecy clouds scud round me on their way,
Condense beneath, and hide the vale from sight,
Then opening, just disclose where Derwent lay
Burnish'd with sunshine like a silver shield,
Or old Enchanter's glass, for magic forms fit field;

33

So at her will, in that receding sheet
Of mist, wherewith the world was overlaid,
A living picture moved beneath our feet.
A spacious City first was there display'd,
The seat where England from her ancient reign
Doth rule the Ocean as her own domain.

34

In splendour with those famous cities old,
Whose power it hath surpass'd, it now might vie;
Through many a bridge the wealthy river roll'd;
Aspiring columns rear'd their heads on high,
Triumphal arches spann'd the roads, and
Due guerdon to the memory of the brave.

35

A landscape follow'd, such as might compare
With Flemish fields for well-requited toil:
The wonder-working hand had every where
Subdued all circumstance of stubborn soil;
In fen and moor reclaim'd rich gardens smiled,
And populous hamlets rose amid the wild.

36

There the old seaman on his native shore
Enjoy'd the competence deserved so well;
The soldier, his dread occupation o'er,
Of well-rewarded service loved to tell;
The grey-hair'd labourer there, whose work was done,
In comfort saw the day of life go down.

37

Such was the lot of eld; for childhood there
The duties which belong to life was taught:
The good seed, early sown and nursed with care,
This bounteous harvest in its season brought;
Thus youth for manhood, manhood for old age
Prepared, and found their weal in every stage.

38

Enough of knowledge unto all was given
In wisdom's way to guide their steps on earth,
And make the immortal spirit fit for heaven.
This needful learning was their right of birth;
Further might each who chose it persevere;
No mind was lost for lack of culture here.

39

And that whole happy region swarm'd with life, . .
Village and town; . . as busy bees in spring
In sunny days when sweetest flowers are rife,
Fill fields and gardens with their murmuring.
Oh joy to see the State in perfect health!
Her numbers were her pride and power and wealth.

40

Then saw I, as the magic picture moved,
Her shores enrich'd with many a port and pier;
No gift of liberal Nature unimproved.
The seas their never failing harvest here [fed
Supplied, as bounteous as the air which
Israel, when manna fell from heaven for bread.

41

Many a tall vessel in her harbours lay,
About to spread its canvass to the breeze,
Bound upon happy errand to convey
The adventurous colonist beyond the seas,
Toward those distant lands, where Britain blest
With her redundant life the East and West.

42

The landscape changed; . . a region next was seen,
Where sable swans on rivers yet unfound [green;
Glided through broad savannahs ever
Innumerous flocks and herds were feeding round,
And scatter'd farms appear'd and hamlets fair
And rising towns, which made another Britain there.

43

Then, thick as stars which stud the moonless sky, [seen;
Green islands in a peaceful sea were
Darken'd no more with blind idolatry,
Nor curst with hideous usages obscene,
But heal'd of leprous crimes, from butchering strife
Deliver'd, and reclaim'd to moral life.

44

Around the rude Morai, the temple now
Of truth, hosannahs to the Holiest rung:
There from the Christian's equal marriage-vow,
In natural growth the household virtues sprung;
Children were taught the paths of heavenly peace,
And age in hope look'd on to its release.

45

The light those happy Islanders enjoy'd,
Good messengers from Britain had convey'd;
(Where might such bounty wiselier be employ'd?)
One people with their teachers were they made,
Their arts, their language, and their faith the same,
And blest in all, for all they blest the British name.

46

Then rose a different land, where loftiest trees
High o'er the grove their fan-like foliage rear;
Where spicy bowers upon the passing breeze
Diffuse their precious fragrance far and near;
And, yet untaught to bend his massive knee,
Wisest of brutes, the elephant roams free.

47

Ministrant there to health and public good,
The busy axe was heard on every side,
Opening new channels, that the noxious wood
With wind and sunshine might be purified,
And that wise Government, the general friend,
Might every where its eye and arm extend.

48

The half-brutal Bedah came from his retreat,
To human life by human kindness won;
The Cingalese beheld that work complete
Which Holland in her day had well begun; [reign,
The Candian, prospering under Britain's
Blest the redeeming hand which broke his chain.

49

Colours and castes were heeded there no more;
Laws which depraved, degraded, and oppress,
Were laid aside, for on that happy shore
All men with equal liberty were blest;
And through the land the breeze upon its swells
Bore the sweet music of the sabbath bells.

50

Again the picture changed; those Isles I saw
With every crime thro' three long centuries curst,
While unrelenting Avarice gave the law;
Scene of the injured Indians' sufferings first,
Then doom'd, for Europe's lasting shame, to see
The wider-wasting guilt of Slavery.

51

That foulest blot had been at length effaced;
Slavery was gone, and all the power it gave,
Whereby so long our nature was debased,
Baleful alike to master and to slave.
O lovely Isles! ye were indeed a sight
To fill the spirit with intense delight!

52

For willing industry and cheerful toil
Perform'd their easy task, with Hope to aid;
And the free children of that happy soil
Dwelt each in peace beneath his cocoa's shade; . .
A race, who with the European mind,
The adapted mould of Africa combined.

53

Anon, methought that in a spacious Square,
Of some great town the goodly ornament,
Three statues I beheld, of sculpture fair:
These, said the Muse, are they whom one consent
Shall there deem worthy of the purest fame; . .
Knowest thou who best such gratitude may claim?

54

Clarkson, I answer'd, first; whom to have seen
And known in social hours may be my pride,
Such friendship being praise; and one, I ween,
Is Wilberforce, placed rightly at his side,
Whose eloquent voice in that great cause was heard
So oft and well. But who shall be the third?

55

Time, said my Teacher, will reveal the name
Of him who with these worthies shall enjoy
The equal honour of enduring fame; . .
He who the root of evil shall destroy,
And from our Laws shall blot the accursed word
Of Slave, shall rightly stand with them preferr'd.

56

Enough! the Goddess cried; with that the cloud
Obey'd, and closed upon the magic scene:
Thus much, quoth she, is to thine hopes allow'd;
Ills may impede, delays may intervene,
But scenes like these the coming age will bless,
If England but pursue the course of righteousness.

57

On she must go progressively in good,
In wisdom and in weal, . . or she must wane.
Like Ocean, she may have her ebb and flood,
But stagnates not. And now her path is plain:
Heaven's first command she may fulfil in peace,
Replenishing the earth with her increase.

58

Peace she hath won, . . with her victorious hand
Hath won through rightful war auspicious peace;
Nor this alone, but that in every land
The withering rule of violence may cease.
Was ever War with such blest victory crown'd!
Did ever Victory with such fruits abound!

59

Rightly for this shall all good men rejoice,
They most who most abhor all deeds of blood;
Rightly for this with reverential voice
Exalt to Heaven their hymns of gratitude;
For ne'er till now did Heaven thy country bless
With such transcendent cause for joy and thankfulness.

60

If they in heart all tyranny abhor,
This was the fall of Freedom's direst foe;
If they detest the impious lust of war,
Here hath that passion had its overthrow; . .
As the best prospects of mankind are dear,
Their joy should be complete, their prayers of praise sincere.

61

And thou to whom in spirit at this hour
The vision of thy Country's bliss is given,
Who feelest that she holds her trusted power
To do the will and spread the word of Heaven, . .
Hold fast the faith which animates thy mind,
And in thy songs proclaim the hopes of humankind.

MISCELLANEOUS POETICAL REMAINS.

FRAGMENTARY THOUGHTS

OCCASIONED BY HIS SON'S DEATH.[1]

THY life was a day, and, sum it well, life is but a week of such days,—with how much storm, and cold, and darkness! Thine was a sweet spring holiday, —a vernal Sabbath, all sunshine, hope, and promise.

---

and that name
In sacred silence buried, which was still
At morn and eve the never-wearying theme
Of dear discourse.

---

playful thoughts
Turn'd now to gall and esel.

He to whom Heaven in mercy hath assign'd
Life's wholesome wormwood, fears no bitterness when
From th' hand of Death he drinks the Amreeta cup.

Beauties of Nature,—the passion of my youth,
Nursed up and ripen'd to a settled love,
Whereto my heart is wedded.

Feeling at Westminster, when summer evening sent a sadness to my heart, and I sate pining for green fields, and banks of flowers, and running streams, —or dreaming of Avon and her rocks and woods.

---

[1] Letter to Mr. W. Taylor, March, 1817. 'I have begun a desultory poem in blank verse, pitched in a higher key than Cowper's, and in a wiser strain of philosophy than Young's; but as yet I have not recovered heart enough to proceed with it; nor is it likely that it will be published during my life.'

No more great attempts, only a few autumnal flowers, like second primroses, &c.

They who look for me in our Father's kingdom
Will look for Him also; inseparably
Shall we be so remember'd.

The Grave the house of Hope:
It is the haven whither we are bound
On the rough sea of life, and thence she lands
In her own country, on the immortal shore.

Come, then,
Pain and Infirmity—appointed guests,
My heart is ready.

My soul
Needed perhaps a longer discipline,
Or sorer penance, here.

A respite something like repose is gain'd
While I invoke them, and the troubled tide
Of feeling, for a while allay'd, obeys
A tranquillising influence, that might seem
By some benign intelligence dispensed,
Who lends an ear to man.
They are not, though,
Mere unrealities: rather, I ween,
The ancient Poets, in the graceful garb
Of fiction, have transmitted earliest truths,
Ill understood; adorning, as they deem'd,
With mythic tales things erringly received,
And mingling with primeval verities
Their own devices vain. For what to us
Scripture assures, by searching proof confirm'd,
And inward certainty of sober Faith,
Tradition unto them deliver'd down
Changed and corrupted in the course of time,
And haply also by delusive art
Of Evil Powers.———

IMAGINATION AND REALITY

The hill was in the sunshine gay and green,
The vale below could not be seen;
A cloud hung over it,
A thin white cloud, that scarce was seen to fly,
So slowly did it flit;
Yet cloud methinks I err in calling it,
It spread so evenly along the sky.
It gave the hills beyond a hue
So beautiful and blue,
That I stood loitering for the view:
Loitering and musing thoughtfully stood I,
For well those hills I knew,
And many a time had travell'd them all o'er;
Yet now such change the hazy air had wrought,
That I could well have thought
I never had beheld the scene before.
But while I gazed the cloud was passing by;
On the slow air it slowly travell'd on,
Eftsoon and that deceitful haze was gone,
Which had beguiled me with its mockery;
And all things seem'd again the things they were.
Alas! but then they were not half so fair
As I had shaped them in the hazy air!

ADDITIONAL FRAGMENT

OCCASIONED BY THE DEATH OF HIS SON

Daughters of Jove and of Mnemosyne,
Pierian sisters, in whose sacred paths,
From my youth up these duteous feet have trod;
Ye who with your awakening influence warm'd
My youthful heart, disdaining not to accept
The first fruits of an offering immature,
And who into my riper strains have breathed
Truth, knowledge, life, and immortality;
An earthly heritage indefeasible

Assuring to me thus, with Bards of old,
With the blind Grecian of the rocky isle,
The Mantuan, and the Tuscan; and, more dear
To me than all of elder Rome and Greece,
My honour'd master, who on Mulla's side,
Mid the green alders, mused his heavenly lay;
Be with me, O ye Nymphs of Castaly
Divine, be with me now; ye who so oft
Have given me strength, and confidence, and joy,
O give me comfort now!—to you I look
In sorrow, who in gladness heretofore,
Yet never but with deepest faith devout,
Have wooed your visitation. For no strain
Of querulous regret I ask your aid,
Impatient of the chastening hand of Heaven;
But rather that your power may discipline
Thoughts that will rise—may teach me to control
The course of grief, and in discursive flight
Leading my spirit, sometimes through the past,
Sometimes with bold yet not irreverent reach
Into the region of futurity,
Abstract her from the sense of present woe.
Short time hath pass'd since from my pilgrimage
To my rejoicing home restored I sung
A true thanksgiving song of pure delight.
Never had man whom Heaven would heap with bliss
More happy day, more glad return than mine;
Yon mountains with their wintry robe were clothed
When, from a heart that overflow'd with joy,
I pour'd that happy strain. The snow not yet
Upon their mountain sides hath disappear'd
Beneath the breath of spring, and in the grave
Herbert is laid, the child who welcomed me
With deepest love upon that joyful day;
Herbert, my only and my studious boy,
The sweet companion of my daily walks,
Whose sports, whose studies, and whose thoughts I shared,
Yea in whose life I lived, in whom I saw
My better part transmitted and improved,
Child of my heart and mind, the flower and crown
Of all my hopes and earthly happiness.

APPENDIX

A LIST OF POEMS NOT REPRINTED IN THE PRESENT EDITION

(*a*) Poems published in the collected edition of 1837–8.

JOAN OF ARC.

THE VISION OF THE MAID OF ORLEANS.

THE TRIUMPH OF WOMAN.

WAT TYLER.

POEMS CONCERNING THE SLAVE TRADE.
- Six Sonnets.
- To the Genius of Africa.
- The Sailor who had served in the Slave Trade.

BOTANY BAY ECLOGUES:—
- Elinor.
- Humphrey and William.
- John, Samuel, and Richard.
- Frederick.

SONNETS:—
- I. 'Go, Valentine, and tell that lovely maid.'
- II. 'Think, Valentine, as speeding on thy way.'
- III. 'Not to thee, Bedford, mournful is the tale.'

MONODRAMAS:—
- Sappho.
- Ximalpoca.
- The Wife of Fergus.
- Lucretia.
- La Caba.

THE AMATORY POEMS OF ABEL SHUFFLEBOTTOM:—
- Sonnets.
- Love Elegies.

LYRIC POEMS.
- To Horror.
- To a Friend.
- The Soldier's Wife.
- The Chapel Bell.
- To Hymen.
- Written on the First of December.
- Written on the First of January.
- Written on Sunday Morning.
- The Race of Banquo.
- Written in Alentejo.
- To Recovery.
- Youth and Age.
- The Oak of our Fathers.
- The Battle of Pultowa.
- Translation of a Greek Ode on Astronomy.
- Gooseberry Pie.
- To a Bee.
- The Destruction of Jerusalem.
- The Death of Wallace.
- The Spanish Armada.
- St. Bartholomew's Day.

SONGS OF THE AMERICAN INDIANS:—
- The Huron's Address to the Dead.
- The Peruvian's Dirge Over the Body of his Father.
- Song of the Araucans during a Thunderstorm.
- Song of the Chikkasah Widow.
- The old Chikkasah to his Grandson.

OCCASIONAL PIECES:—
- The Pauper's Funeral.
- The Soldier's Funeral.

OCCASIONAL PIECES (*continued*)
On the Death of a Favourite Old Spaniel.
Autumn.
The Victory.

ENGLISH ECLOGUES:—
The Grandmother's Tale.
The Sailor's Mother.
The Witch.
The Last of the Family.
The Wedding.

NONDESCRIPTS:—
Written the Winter after the Installation at Oxford, 1793.
Snuff.
Cool Reflections during a Midsummer Walk.
The Pig.
The Dancing Bear.
The Filbert.
Robert the Rhymer's True and Particular Account of Himself.

ODES.
Written during the War with America.
CARMINA AULICA: WRITTEN IN 1814, ON THE ARRIVAL OF THE ALLIED SOVEREIGNS IN ENGLAND.
Ode to His Royal Highness the Prince Regent of the United Kingdom.

ODES (*continued*)
Ode to His Imperial Majesty, Alexander the First, Emperor of All the Russias.
Ode to His Majesty, Frederick William the Fourth, King of Prussia.
On the Battle of Algiers.
On the Death of Queen Charlotte.
Ode for St. George's Day.
Ode Written after the King's Visit to Ireland.
Ode Written after the King's Visit to Scotland.
The Warning Voice.
On the Portrait of Bishop Heber.

BALLADS AND METRICAL TALES.
Old Christoval's Advice.
King Charlemain.
The King of the Crocodiles.
King Ramiro.
Gonzalo Hermiguez.
The Surgeon's Warning.

ALL FOR LOVE.

THE PILGRIM TO COMPOSTELLA.

CARMEN NUPTIALE—The Lay of the Laureate.

A VISION OF JUDGEMENT.

(*b*) Poems published in 'Oliver Newman: With Other Poetical Remains' (1845).

OLIVER NEWMAN
Short Passages of Scripture, Rhythmically Arranged or Paraphrased.
Madrigal, Translated from Luis Martin.
Mohammed; a Fragment Written in 1799.

(*c*) Poems published in 'Robin Hood . . . a Fragment. By the late Robert Southey and Caroline Southey. With Other Fragments and Poems by R. S. and C. S.' (1847).

Robin Hood, Part I.
The Three Spaniards.
March.

Apart from the poems mentioned in the foregoing list there were many early pieces which Southey did not see fit to republish in 1837–8. The curious in such matters may search for them over the signature 'Bion' in *Poems by Robert Lovell and Robert Southey*, 1795; in *The Annual Anthology* for 1799 and 1800;[1] and in *Letters from Spain and Portugal*, 1797. Three or four poems sent by Southey to Daniel Stuart, editor of *The Morning Post*, are to be found printed in *Letters from the Lake Poets*, ed. E. H. Coleridge, 1889; and a few stray verses lie scattered among the volumes of his published correspondence. Southey's contribution to *The Fall of Robespierre* (1794) may be found printed in Coleridge's *Poetical Works*, ed. J. Dykes Campbell, pp. 216–225. Of that notable drama Coleridge was responsible for the first Act; the second and third were written by Southey in two days, 'as fast as newspapers could be put into blank verse.' A poetical address to Amos Cottle appeared in the latter's volume of *Icelandic Poetry*, 1797. There are probably other verses contributed by Southey to *The Morning Post*, *The Courier*, and other newspapers still lying unclaimed and uncollected in the columns in which they first saw the light. But the bulk of the pieces which he did not republish are to be found in the volumes mentioned above.

[1] In *The Annual Anthology* Southey's contributions are to be found sometimes over his own name, sometimes over the signatures R. S.,—R.,—R. S. Y.,—S.,—Erthusyo,—Theoderit,—Abel Shufflebottom,—or Byondo; and occasionally without any signature at all. Of the unsigned pieces a few were reprinted in the collected edition of his Poetical Works, in 1837–8. According to Alexander Dyce's MS. notes in the two volumes of *The Annual Anthology* formerly belonging to Southey (now in the Dyce collection at the Victoria and Albert Museum), Southey was also the author of the verses which appear without a signature in vol. i, pp. 22, 36, 52, 134, 137, 139, 145, 208.

NOTES

N.B. In the references in these Notes, *Life* = *The Life and Correspondence of Robert Southey* (edited by his son, Cuthbert Southey, 6 vols., 1849, 1850); *Warter* = *Selections from the Letters of Robert Southey* (edited by J. W. Warter, 4 vols., 1856).

THALABA THE DESTROYER

Written July 1799–July 1800; published in two volumes, 12mo, by Longman and Rees, in 1801. A second edition was published by Longman in 1809. This edition is more heavily stopped than that of 1801, to the great improvement of the sense; and the variations from the 1801 text are numerous and important. The mottoes to the different books also appeared first in the 1809 edition, and the notes were much amplified and placed at the end of each book, instead of at the bottom of the page. A third edition appeared in 1814, differing from the last only in having the stanzas numbered, and in the lapidary arrangement of the lines. Southey introduced many minor corrections when he finally revised the poem for publication in 1837.

I am indebted to the kindness of Mr. E. H. Coleridge for permission to print the following extract from a letter from S. T. Coleridge to Daniel Stuart, editor of *The Morning Post*. The letter bears date, Sept. 19, 1801:—

'Have you seen the Thalaba? It is not altogether a poem exactly to my taste; there are, however, three uncommonly fine passages in it. The first [1] in Volume 1st, beginning (page 130) at the words, "It was the wisdom and the will of Heaven," continued to the end of the 3rd line, page 134: then omitting the intermediate pages, pass on to page 147, and recommence with the words "Their father is their priest", to the last line of page 166, concluding with the words "Of Thalaba went by". This would be a really good extract, and I am sure none of the Reviews will have either feeling or taste to select . . .

'The next extract[2] is in Volume 2, page 126, beginning at the words, "All waste, no sign of life," &c., to page 131, ending with the words, "She clapped her hands for joy."

'The third passage [3] is very short, and uncommonly lyrical; indeed, in versification and conception, superior to anything I have ever seen of Southey's. It must begin at the third line of page 142, Volume 2nd, and be entitled "Khawla", or "The Enchantress's Incantation". "Go out, ye lights, quoth Khawla," &c.—and go on to the last words of page 143.'—*Letters from the Lake Poets*, pp. 20–2.

Page 23. Book I, Stanza 1. As an illustration of the way in which Southey altered and improved his poems after their first publication, it is interesting

[1] See Book III, Stanzas 16–25.
[2] See Book VIII, Stanzas 22–30.
[3] See Book IX, Stanza 6 to the end of Stanza 9, line 2.

to note the changes introduced into the opening stanza of *Thalaba*. In the first edition the stanza ran as follows:—

How beautiful is night!
A dewy freshness fills the silent air,
No mist obscures, no little cloud
Breaks the whole serene of heaven:
In full-orbed glory the majestic moon
Rolls thro' the dark blue depths.
Beneath her steady ray
The desert circle spreads,
Like the round ocean, girdled with the sky.
How beautiful is night!

The stanza first appeared in its present form in the second edition of the poem.

PAGE 27. Book I, l. 246. *The hunter Afri.* So edn. 1837–8. I have retained this reading with hesitation, suspecting it to be a misprint for 'The hunter African' of edd. 1801, 1809.

PAGE 33, ll. 656, 657. 'The angel of death', say the Rabbis, 'holdeth his sword in his hand at the bed's head, having on the end thereof three drops of gall; the sick man, spying this deadly Angel, openeth his mouth with fear, and then those drops fall in, of which one killeth him, the second maketh him pale, the third rotteth and purifieth.'—Purchas. (S.)

PAGE 35. Book II, ll. 165–70. 'These lines contain the various opinions of the Mahommedans respecting the intermediate state of the Blessed, till the Day of Judgement.' (S.)

Zemzem-well. According to Mahommedan tradition Ishmael, when a new-born babe, made a way for a spring to break forth by dancing with his little feet upon the ground. But the water came forth with such abundance and violence that Hagar could not drink of it. Abraham, coming to the place, stayed the force of the spring, and made Hagar and Ishmael drink. 'The said spring is to this day called Semsem, from Abraham making use of that word to stay it.'—Olearius. (S.)

PAGE 58. Book V, l. 72. *City of Peace.* Almanzor, the founder of Bagdad, named his new city Dar-al-Salam, the City of Peace. (S.)

l. 78. *Thy founder the Victorious.* 'Almanzor signifies the Victorious.' (S.)

PAGE 61, l. 282. 'The Mussulmauns use, like the Roman Catholics, a rosary of beads, called Tusbah, or implement of praise . . .'—Note to the Bahar-Danush. (S.)

PAGE 62, ll. 297–9. 'The Mahummedans believe that the decreed events of every man's life are impressed in divine characters on his forehead, though not to be seen by mortal eye.'—Note to the Bahar-Danush. (S.)

l. 307. 'Zohak was the fifth King of the Pischdadian dynasty, lineally descended from Shedad, who perished with the tribe of Ad. Zohak murdered his predecessor, and invented the punishments of the cross and of flaying alive. The Devil, who had long served him, requested at last, as a recompence, permission to kiss his shoulders; immediately two serpents grew there, who fed upon his flesh, and endeavoured to get at his brain. The Devil now suggested a remedy, which was to quiet them by giving them every day the brains of two men, killed for that purpose: this tyranny lasted long; till a blacksmith of Ispahan, whose children had been nearly all slain to feed the King's serpents, raised his leather apron as the standard of revolt, and deposed Zohak. Zohak, say the Persians, is still living in the cave of his punishment.'—D'Herbelot. Olearius. (S.)

PAGE 69. Book VI, ll. 287–96. 'In the Caherman Nameh, the Dives having taken in war some of the Peris, imprisoned them in iron cages which they hung from the highest trees they could find. There, from time to time, their companions visited them with the most precious odours. These odours were the usual food of the Peris, and procured them also another advantage, for they prevented the Dives from approaching or molesting them. The Dives could not bear the perfumes, which rendered them gloomy and melancholy whenever they drew near the cage in which a Peri was suspended.'—D'Herbelot. (S.)

PAGE 74. Book VII, l. 184. *Zaccoum's fruit accurst.* According to the Koran the Zaccoum is a tree which issues from the bottom of Hell. Its fruit is to be eaten by the damned. (S.)

l. 194. The Arabian women 'of the tribe of Himiar, or of the Homerites, are early exercised in riding the horse, and in using the bow, the lance, and the javelin.'—Marigny.

PAGE 75, l. 264. *The Paradise of Sin.* 'The story is told by many writers, but with such difference of time and place as wholly to invalidate its truth, even were the circumstances more probable.' (S.) Southey quotes, among others, a long account from Sir John Maundeville.

PAGE 85. Book VIII, Stanza 36. 'How came Mohareb to be Sultan of this island? Every one who has read *Don Quixote* knows that there are always islands to be had by adventurers. He killed the former Sultan, and reigned in his stead. What could not a Domdanielite perform? The narration would have interrupted the flow of the main story.' (S.)

PAGE 91. Book IX, ll. 413–16. 'A thicket of balm trees is said to have sprung up from the blood of the Moslem slain at Beder.' (S.) Southey in his note ad loc. quotes Pausanias and other writers as speaking of vipers which were rendered innocuous by feeding on the juice of the balsam-tree.

PAGE 92, l. 492. *That most holy night.* 'The night, Leileth-ul-cadr, is considered as being particularly consecrated to ineffable mysteries. There is a prevailing opinion, that a thousand secret and invisible prodigies are performed on this night; that all the inanimate beings then pay their adoration to God; that all the waters of the sea lose their saltness, and become fresh at these mysterious moments; that such, in fine, is its sanctity, that prayers said during this night are equal in value to all those which can be said in a thousand successive months. It has not, however, pleased God . . . to reveal it to the faithful . . .'—D'Ohsson. (S.)

PAGE 93. Stanzas 44 and 45. These stanzas, together with stanza 1 of Book X, replaced in 1809 a passage, unhappy alike in conception and in execution, which had appeared in the first edition. This cancelled passage consisted of 126 lines—109 in Book IX, and 17 in Book X. In it Mohareb and Khawla have learnt of Maimuna's treachery. To further their revenge they resolve to secure 'the deadliest poison that the Devils know', namely, the last foam on the lips of a red-haired Christian who has been beaten to death. Accordingly, on the following morning, Maimuna and Thalaba watch from the latter's prison the execution of the Christian victim. Khawla catches the poison in a bowl. The bowl bursts, and from the poison which falls upon the ground springs the Upas Tree of Death. Khawla and Mohareb flee away in a whirlwind. The prison walls fall with a crash: and Maimuna and Thalaba are borne in the Chariot of the Winds to the former's cave.

PAGE 102. Book XI, Stanza 11. '"Simorg Anka", says my friend Mr. Fox, in a note to his Achmed Ardebeili, "is a bird or griffon of extraordinary strength and size (as its name imports, signifying as large as thirty eagles), which, according

to the Eastern writers, was sent by the Supreme Being to subdue and chastise the rebellious Dives. It was supposed to possess rational faculties, and the gift of speech." . . .' (S.)

PAGE 106. Book XI, ll. 367-73. 'Some travellers may perhaps be glad to know that the spring from which this description was taken is near Bristol, about a mile from Stokes-Croft turnpike, and known by the name of the Boiling Well. Other and larger springs of the same kind, called the Lady Pools, are near Shobdon, in Herefordshire.' (S.)

PAGE 115. Book XII, l. 461. 'Araf is a place between the Paradise and the Hell of the Mahommedans; some deem it a veil of separation, some a strong wall. Others hold it to be a Purgatory, in which those believers will remain, whose good and evil works have been so equal, that they were neither virtuous enough to enter Paradise, nor guilty enough to be condemned to the fire of Hell . . .'—D'Herbelot. (S.)

THE CURSE OF KEHAMA

Written May 1801–Nov. 1809: published in one volume, 4to, by Longman in 1810. In the first edition the stanzas were unnumbered and differently divided. The variations in the text of the first and later editions are comparatively few and unimportant. A fourth edition was published in 1818.

There is a MS. of this poem in Southey's handwriting in the British Museum (No. 36,485). A note appended by Southey's brother, Captain Thomas Southey, R.N., states that this MS. 'was written for me and sent sheet by sheet in letters, the greater part of which were received on board His Majesty's *Dreadnought*, off the coast of France in 1809'. The British Museum Catalogue says, 'the text in many passages differs from that of the poem as printed, agreeing generally with the original form as found in an autograph copy, begun May 28, 1806, now in possession of Miss Warter, the poet's granddaughter, the corrections made in which were embodied in the printed text.'

In the British Museum MS. there is no list of characters and no preface. The motto, 'Curses are like young chickens, &c. . .' is attributed to 'Uncle William', and there is no Greek version of it. The motto in question was a saying of Southey's uncle William, a half-witted brother of Miss Tyler, with whom he lived. The Greek version and its mysterious reference are due to Coleridge. Southey has described William Tyler under the name of William Dove in *The Doctor, &c.*, Chapter X, P. I. and passim.

There is another MS. of *The Curse of Kehama*, bound up with a MS. of *Roderick*, in the Victoria and Albert Museum (number 480 in the Catalogue of MSS., in the Forster Collection). These MSS. were sent by Southey to W. S. Landor in sections, as the composition of the two poems proceeded. The MS. of *The Curse of Kehama* contains no list of characters, preface, or mottoes. The whole of it from Section VII onwards is in Southey's handwriting. The first section is dated May 28, 1806, and thus represents the original draught as it stood some two years before Southey first met Landor. The ending of the poem is identical with that in the British Museum MS.;—see note on Section XXIV, below.

In an unpublished letter to Landor, now in the Victoria and Albert Museum, written at the end of the MS. of the first section of *Roderick*, and dated Keswick, July 14, 1810, Southey speaks of *The Curse of Kehama* as follows:—

'The structure of the poem is its main merit—in this point it is far superior to Thalaba,—in most other respects I am afraid I myself do not like it quite so well, and am well assured that most persons will like it even less,—or in

plainer language will dislike it more. About this I am perfectly indifferent. It is a work sui generis, which like *Gebir* will find its own admirers, and I have always sincerely echoed your original preface upon that point.'

See also *Landor's Works and Life*, by J. Forster (1876), vol. i, p. 110.

PAGE 139. Section VII, l. 197. *The lute of Nared.* In Hindoo legend Nared, a divine son of Brahma, invented the Vina, or Indian lute. (S.)

PAGE 151. Section X, l. 262. *his Dragon foe.* Ra'hu, a dragon-like monster, according to Hindoo legend strives during eclipses to wreak vengeance on the Sun and Moon for having denounced a fraud which he had practised on the gods. (S.)

PAGE 162. Section XIII, l. 131. *Voomdavee.* The wife of Veeshnoo, the goddess of the earth and of patience. (S.).

PAGE 163, ll. 175–6. '"The Hindoo poets frequently allude to the fragrant juice which oozes, at certain seasons, from small ducts in the temples of the male elephant, and is useful in relieving him from the redundant moisture with which he is then oppressed; and they even describe the bees as allured by the scent, and mistaking it for that of the sweetest flowers." Wilford, *Asiatic Researches*.' (S.)

PAGE 191. Section XXI, l. 84. *that strange Indian bird.* 'The Chatookee. They say it never drinks at the streams below, but, opening its bill when it rains, it catches the drops as they fall from the clouds.'—*Periodical Accounts of the Baptist Missionaries*, vol. ii, p. 309. (S.)

l. 88. *the footless fowl of Heaven:* sc. the bird of Paradise, which travellers said was to be found in the Molucca Islands, born without legs. (S.)

PAGE 207. Section XXIV. In the British Museum MS. the poem ends as follows after Stanza 23:—

'Thus hath the will of destiny been done,'
Then said the Lord of Padalon.
'Thus are the secret ways of Heaven made known
And justified. Ye heirs of heavenly bliss,
Go to the Swerga Bowers,
And there recall the hours
Of endless happiness.
For thee, Ladurlad, there is yet in store
One glorious task. Return to Earth—restore
Justice and Peace, by Tyranny put down.
Then shalt thou have thine everlasting crown,
And join thy best-beloved for evermore.'

RODERICK, THE LAST OF THE GOTHS

Written, Dec. 2, 1809–July 14, 1814: published in one volume, 4to, by Longman, in 1814. The text of 1838 differs only in a few unimportant particulars from that of the first edition. The mottoes from Tacitus and *The Excursion* first appeared in the second edition, published in 1815. The poem reached a fourth edition early in 1816.

There is in the Victoria and Albert Museum a MS. of the first eighteen sections of *Roderick*,—as they were sent successively by Southey to Landor,—bound up with the corresponding MS. of *The Curse of Kehama*—(No. 480 in the Catalogue

of MSS. in the Forster Collection). Every section save the first is in Southey's handwriting. At the end of Sections I, II, VI, VII, IX, X, XII, XIII, XIV, XVI, and XVII are letters or postscripts, all signed with Southey's initials, except the first, which is signed in full. The letter to Landor at the end of Section I is dated Keswick, July 14, 1810. The postmark on the last section (XVIII) bears date, Sept. 26, 1814.

In this MS. the poem is called 'Pelayo', for it was Southey's original intention that Pelayo should be its hero. As the work progressed, however, the character of Roderick assumed a more and more predominating importance. Accordingly, in sending Section VI to Landor, Southey writes to him (in an unpublished letter) as follows (Sept. 11, 1812):—

'The next book is nearly finished. I believe I must go back to the fifth, and interpolate a passage introductory of Egilona, whose death I think of bringing forward in Book 8, and in whose character I must seek for such a palliation of the rape of Florinda as may make Roderick's crime not so absolutely incompatible with his heroic qualities as it now appears. The truth is that in consequence of having begun the story with Roderick I have imperceptibly been led to make him the prominent personage of the poem, and have given him virtues which it will be very difficult to make consistent with his fall.'

The description of Egilona, Section V, ll. 124–44, was subsequently interpolated with the object described above.

Southey justly regarded *Roderick* as his highest achievement as a poet. H. Crabb Robinson writes in his Diary for Sept. 15, 1816, 'Of his own works he (Southey) thinks *Don Roderick* by far the best.' And this statement is corroborated by a letter from Southey to Dr. Gooch, dated Nov. 30, 1814, in which he says, 'You have in Roderick the best which I have done, and, probably, the best that I shall do, which is rather a melancholy feeling for the author' (*Life*, vol. iv, p. 90).

Southey gives the following lively description of his feelings on the completion of this poem in an unpublished letter to his brother, Captain Thomas Southey, R.N., dated Thursday, 14 July, 1814, now in the British Museum:—

'Monday came and I continued at my task, still writing like a Lion—it was like going up a mountain, the termination seemed to recede as I advanced. So I was still at it on Tuesday middleday, when in came a Laker to interrupt me. . . . This morning I went again to work, and just at dinner-time finished a poem which was begun 2 December 1809. The last book has extended to 580 lines, and the whole work to 7,000, some twenty more or less.—Hourra! your Serene Highness! O be joyful St. Helen's, Auckland, and Greta Hall! . . . I do not feel exactly as Gibbon did, who knew that it was impossible for him ever to execute another work of equal magnitude with his great history; for I neither want subjects nor inclination for fresh attempts. But this poem has been 4½ years on hand, and had been thought of as many years before it was begun: and it is impossible not to feel how very doubtful it is whether I may ever again compleat one of equal extent, or of equal merit,—tho' never at any part of my life better disposed for it in will or in power than at the present time.'

It may be well to add here Charles Lamb's appreciation of the poem, as conveyed to Southey in a letter of May 6, 1815:—

'The story of the brave Maccabee', he wrote, 'was already, you may be sure, familiar to me in all its parts. I have, since the receipt of your present, read it quite through again, and with no diminished pleasure. . . . The parts I have been most pleased with, both on first and second readings, perhaps, are Florinda's palliation of Roderick's crime, confessed to him in his disguise—the retreat of the Palayos (sic) family first discovered—his being made king—"For acclamation

one form must serve *more solemn for the breach of old observances.*" Roderick's vow is extremely fine, and his blessing on the vow of Alphonso:

> Towards the troops he spread his arms,
> As if the expanded soul diffused itself,
> And carried to all spirits *with the act*
> Its effluent inspiration.

'It struck me forcibly that the feeling of these last lines might have been suggested to you by the Cartoon of Paul at Athens. Certain it is that a better motto or guide to that famous attitude can nowhere be found. I shall adopt it as explanatory of that violent but dignified motion.'

The Letters of C. Lamb, ed. Ainger, vol. i, pp. 290–2.

Page 210. Section I, l. 30. *the name of thy new conqueror.* 'Gibel-al-Tarif, the mountain of Tarif, is the received etymology of Gibraltar: Ben Hazel, a Granadan Moor, says expressly, that the mountain derived its name from this general.' (S.)

l. 69. 'Guadalete had been thus interpreted to Florez. (*España Sagrada*, t. ix, p. 53.)' (S.)

Page 221. Section III, ll. 99–105. 'The Roman Conimbrica stood about two leagues from the present Coimbra, on the site of Condeyxa Velha. Ataces, king of the Alanes, won it from the Sueves, and, in revenge for its obstinate resistance, dispeopled it, making all its inhabitants, without distinction of persons, work at the foundation of Coimbra, where it now stands . . . Ataces was an Arian, and therefore made the Catholic bishops and priests work at his new city, but his queen converted him.' (S.)

Page 223, l. 189. *Diogo's amorous lute.* 'Diogo Bernardes, one of the best of the Portugueze poets, was born on the banks of the Lima, and passionately fond of its scenery . . .' (S.)

Page 226, l. 326. The collected edition of 1838 and the one-volume edition reprinted from it read 'Yet' as the first word of this line,—clearly a misprint for the 'Yea' of 1814, which has been restored in the present edition.

Page 254. Section X. In sending this Section—perhaps the finest in the whole poem—to Landor, Southey thus writes (in an unpublished letter) of the difficulty which he had experienced in its composition: 'You have here a part of the poem so difficult to get over, even tolerably, that I verily believe, if I had at first thought of making Roderick anything more than a sincere penitent, this difficulty would have deterred me from attempting the subject. There will probably be much to amend in it hereafter,—but I think it is in the right strain, and that the passion is properly made diffuse.' (March 3, 1813.)

It may be added that the changes eventually made in the original draught of this section as it had been sent to Landor were comparatively few and unimportant.

Page 277. Section XV. In a letter to G. C. Bedford, of August 8, 1815 (*Warter*, ii, 420), Southey thus anticipates an obvious criticism upon this and other portions of the poem:—

'The strongest objection which has or can be urged against the poem is, that Roderick should not be recognized; but the fact is strictly possible. A friend of mine (poor Charles Danvers), after a fortnight's absence, during which he had been very exposed to weather, sleeping out of doors, and in an open boat, and had endured the greatest anxiety (in assisting a man to escape to America, who would have been hanged for high treason, if he had been taken), was so

altered as literally not to be recognized at the end of that time by an old servant of the family. Think, also, what a difference grey hairs will make; and how soon grief will produce this change has often been seen. When the Queen of France was murdered, her hair was perfectly white. This I have carefully marked in Roderick; I have also made his mother recognize him upon the first hint, and Swerian also. As for Julian, it is nowhere implied that he had ever seen Roderick; on the contrary, Africa was his home.'

PAGE 294. Section XVIII, l. 107. *orary*:—'a scarf or tippet to be worn upon the shoulders . . .' (S.)

l. 109. '*Precious or auriphrygiate.* "Mitrae . . . triplex est species: una quae pretiosa dicitur, quia gemmis et lapidibus pretiosis, vel laminis aureis, vel argenteis contexta esse solet; altera auriphrygiata sine gemmis, et sine laminis aureis vel argenteis; sed vel aliquibus parvis margaritis composita, vel ex serico albo auro intermisto, vel ex tela aurea simplici sine laminis et margaritis; tertia, quae simplex vocatur sine auro, . . ."—*Caeremoniale Episcoporum*, l. 1, c. 17.' (S.)

PAGE 315. Section XXI, ll. 424–34. 'The image of the clouds and the moon I saw from my chamber window at Cintra when going to bed, and noted it down with its application next morning. I have it at this moment distinctly before my eyes with all its accompanying earth-scenery.'

Letter from R. S. to C. W. W. Wynn, March 9, 1815. *Life*, iv, p. 107.

PAGE 321. Section XXIII, l. 31. 'The humma is a fabulous bird: the head over which its shadow once passes will assuredly be encircled with a crown.' —Wilkes, *S. of India*, v. i, p. 423. (S.)

SELECTED MINOR POEMS

PAGE 344. *The Dead Friend.* This poem was written in memory of Edmund Seward, of Balliol College, Oxford, who died in June, 1795. Seward had been one of the little band who originally entered upon the scheme of Pantisocracy, but he had soon realized that the plan was visionary and impracticable, and had ceased to support it. Southey writes as follows to G. C. Bedford, on June 15, 1795: 'Bedford,—he is dead; my dear Edmund Seward! after six weeks suffering. These, Grosvenor, are the losses that gradually wean us from life. May that man want consolation in his last hour, who would rob the survivor of the belief, that he shall again behold his friend! You know not, Grosvenor, how I loved poor Edmund: he taught me all that I have of good.' (*Life*, i, p. 240.) And in a letter to J. Rickman of Oct. 5, 1807, he describes Seward as having been his 'nearest and dearest friend' (*Warter*, ii, 20). There is another allusion to the sorrow of this loss in the 'Hymn to the Penates', lines 198–221.

PAGE 345. *Funeral Song for the Princess Charlotte of Wales.* The Princess Charlotte, daughter of George IV (then Prince Regent), and heir-presumptive to the throne, married Prince Leopold of Saxe-Coburg in 1816, and died in child-birth, Nov. 5, 1817.

PAGE 346, ll. 110–24. During the building of a mausoleum under St. George's Chapel, Windsor, an accidental opening was made by the workmen into the Henry VIII vault. Three coffins were visible in the vault,—two of them those of Henry VIII and Jane Seymour; and, as there was some doubt as to the burial-place of King Charles I, owing to a passage in Lord Clarendon's *History of the Rebellion* (iii, Part I, p. 393 [Oxford, 1807]), which states that unsuccessful search was made for the body shortly after the Restoration, the Prince Regent

ordered that the third coffin in the vault should be examined and the doubtful point set at rest.

The examination was made on April 1, 1813, in the presence of the Prince Regent, the Duke of Cumberland, Count Münster, the Dean of Windsor, Benjamin Charles Stevenson, Esq., and Sir Henry Halford, the King's physician. The coffin was covered by a black velvet pall, and, when this was removed, was seen to bear the inscription, 'Charles I, 1648.' When the wrappings of the body were removed and the face exposed, the pointed beard and lower half of the countenance were found to be perfect, and one eye was visible at the first moment, though it disappeared immediately; the nose, however, was defaced. The loose head was taken out and held up to view: the hair at the back was thick and of a dark-brown colour, while the beard was of a more reddish brown. The muscles at the back of the neck showed the traces of a heavy blow from a sharp instrument.

The head was then replaced, and the coffin closed; and, after a cursory examination of the coffins of Henry VIII and Jane Seymour, the vault was closed.

The above particulars are drawn from a pamphlet in the Royal Library at Windsor, by Sir Henry Halford, entitled, 'An Account of what appeared on Opening the Coffin of King Charles the First in the Vault of King Henry the Eighth in St. George's Chapel at Windsor, on the First of April 1813.' I am indebted for this information to the kindness of the Honourable John Fortescue, Librarian of the Royal Library, Windsor.

Page 347. *My days among the Dead are past.* Cuthbert Southey, in quoting these lines in his Life of his father, adds the following interesting note:—

'I have an additional pleasure in quoting these lines here, because Mr. Wordsworth . . . once remarked that they possessed a peculiar interest as a most true and touching representation of my father's character. He also wished three alterations to be made in them, in order to reduce the language to correctness and simplicity. In the third line, because the phrase "casual eyes" is too unusual, he proposed—

"Where'er I chance these eyes to cast."

In the sixth line, instead of "converse", "commune", because, as it stands, the accent is wrong.

'In the second stanza, he thought—

"While I understand and feel, . . .
My cheeks have often been bedewed"

was a vicious construction grammatically, and proposed instead,—

"My pensive cheeks are oft bedewed."

These suggestions were made too late for my father to profit by them.'—*Life*, v, 110, n.

Page 348. *The Cataract of Lodore.* The origin of this poem is thus described in a letter from Southey to his brother Thomas, dated October 18, 1809 (*Warter*, ii, 168):—

'I hope . . . you will approve of a description of the water at Lodore, made originally for Edith, and greatly admired by Herbert. In my mind it surpasses any that the tourists have yet printed. Thus it runs—"Tell the people how the water comes down at *Lodore*? Why it comes thundering, and floundering, and thumping, and flumping, and bumping, and jumping, and hissing, and whizzing, and dripping, and skipping, and grumbling, and rumbling, and tumbling, and falling, and brawling, and dashing, and clashing, and splashing, and pouring, and roaring, and whirling, and curling, and leaping, and creeping, and sounding,

and bounding, and clattering, and chattering, with a dreadful uproar,—and that way the water comes down at *Lodore*." '

The doggerel thus first composed by Southey for the amusement of his eldest daughter was developed into the poem as we now know it for the benefit of his youngest child, Cuthbert, more than twelve years later, in 1822 (*Warter*, iii, 315).

There is a MS. of this poem in the British Museum (Ea. 1966), and another in the museum at Keswick. The latter is an early draught. The former is dated 1822, and begins with the line 'Here it lies darkling'. It includes seventy-one lines instead of seventy-nine, as in the corresponding portion of the poem as printed, and there are a few unimportant variants. The following lines—in addition to the first forty-two—are wanting in the MS.—47–50, 60, 61, 71, and 93; and in some cases the order of the lines is slightly different.

Page 350. *Inscription II. Epitaph.* The Emma of this epitaph was the first wife of Southey's friend, General Peachey, who lived on Vicar's Island in Derwentwater. She had been a Miss Charter, of Bishop's Lydeard, near Taunton. She died in 1809 (*Life*, ii, 304; *Warter*, ii, 155).

Page 351. *Inscription III. At Barrosa.* Lieut.-General Graham (afterwards Lord Lynedoch) defeated the French army under Victor at Barrosa on March 5, 1811.

Page 352. *Inscription V. Epitaph.* This epitaph very probably may refer to the death of Southey's eldest son, Herbert, who died on April 17, 1816, in the tenth year of his age. See Notes on 'The Poet's Pilgrimage to Waterloo' and on the 'Fragmentary Thoughts occasioned by his Son's Death', pp. 762, 763.

Page 353. *Dedication of the Author's Colloquies on the Progress and Prospects of Society.* The Rev. H. Hill was Southey's maternal uncle. Southey had indeed found him, as he says, 'more than father.' Mr. Hill had paid the expenses of his education at Westminster and at Oxford, and took him to Lisbon with him in 1795. He encouraged Southey—on the occasion of the latter's second visit to Portugal in 1800—to undertake the writing of a History of Portugal, and, until he himself returned to England in 1807, continued to furnish his nephew with Spanish and Portuguese materials for that work. From that time onwards until his death he constantly corresponded with Southey with reference to the latter's literary employments. On his return to England, Mr. Hill married, and held successively the livings of Staunton-on-Wye and Streatham. One of his sons, Herbert, married Bertha Southey in 1839, and edited Southey's *Oliver Newman: With other Poetical Remains*, in 1845.

Page 357. *Ode written during the Negotiations with Buonaparte, in January*, 1814. The greater part of this ode was originally included in the *Carmen Triumphale*. In deference to the advice of J. W. Croker and Rickman Southey struck out from the *Carmen* five stanzas which were thought too vigorous for an official poem by the Poet Laureate: to these he added three other stanzas, and sent the whole as a separate ode to *The Courier*.

There is a MS. of this ode in the possession of the Rev. Canon Rawnsley. This MS. ends, as did the version first printed in *The Courier*, with the two following lines, subsequently cancelled,—

Pluck from the Upstart's head thy sullied crown,
Down with the Tyrant! With the murderer down!

Professor Dowden has well characterized this ode as 'perhaps the loftiest chaunt of political invective, inspired by moral indignation, which our literature possesses.' And he observes further: 'Southey stood erect in the presence of power which he believed to be immoral, defied it and execrated it. That he did not perceive

how, in driving the ploughshare of Revolution across Europe of the old régime, Napoleon was terribly accomplishing an inevitable and a beneficent work, may have been an error; but it was an error to which no blame attaches, and in his fierce indictment he states, with ample support of facts, one entire side of the case. The ode is indeed more than a poem; it is a historical document expressing the passion which filled many of the highest minds in England, and which at a later date was the justification of Saint Helena.' (*Poems by Robert Southey*, 'Golden Treasury' Series, Introd., pp. xxiv, xxv.)

PAGE 360. *The March to Moscow.* This doggerel march is included here among the Selected Minor Poems, both as being eminently characteristic of the writer and as in some ways complementary to the 'Ode written during the Negotiations with Buonaparte'. Southey wrote it to amuse his children. When it was originally published in *The Courier* the present fourth stanza was suppressed, and the fifth stanza was added later.

Stanza 4, l. 2. *He frightened Mr. Roscoe.* William Roscoe (1753–1831), historian, banker, and Whig M.P. for Liverpool 1806–7, was a strong advocate of peace with France, and published several pamphlets between 1793 and 1810 in support of such a policy.

PAGE 366. *The Old Woman of Berkeley.* There is a MS. of this ballad in the British Museum. It is in Mrs. Southey's handwriting, dated Martin Hall, Oct. 5 (1798), and was enclosed in a letter to Thomas Southey, in which Southey says of it, 'I like the ballad much.'

PAGE 378. *Inscription for a Coffee-Pot.* These lines, written in 1830, or early in 1831, explain themselves. They were, of course, never published by Southey, but were printed in a note, *Warter*, iv, pp. 203, 204. It turned out, when the coffee-pot had been chosen, that there was not room on it for the proposed inscription.

PAGE 385. *The Widow.* These lines are here printed as having given rise to one of the most famous parodies in the language. 'The Friend of Humanity and the Knife-Grinder' was written by Canning and Frere, and appeared in No. II of *The Anti-Jacobin* on Nov. 27, 1797.

The Old Man's Comforts. These lines are chiefly notable as the original of Lewis Carroll's brilliant parody in *Alice in Wonderland.*

PAGE 386. *To a Spider.* Charles Lamb's criticism of this poem is of interest. Writing to Southey on March 20, 1799, he says:—

'I am hugely pleased with your "Spider", "your old freemason," as you call him. The first three stanzas are delicious; they seem to me a compound of Burns and Old Quarles, the kind of home-strokes where more is felt than strikes the ear; a terseness, a jocular pathos, which makes one feel in laughter. The measure, too, is novel and pleasing. I could almost wonder Robert Burns in his lifetime never stumbled upon it. The fourth stanza is less striking, as being less original. The fifth falls off. It has no felicity of phrase, no old-fashioned phrase or feeling.

Young hopes, and love's delightful dreams

savour neither of Burns nor Quarles; they seem more like shreds of many a modern sentimental sonnet. The last stanza hath nothing striking in it, if I except the two concluding lines, which are Burns all over.'

The Letters of Charles Lamb, ed. Ainger, i, 104, 105.

PAGE 394. *To Margaret Hill.* Margaret Hill, to whom this poem is addressed, was Southey's favourite cousin. He appears to have himself defrayed the expenses of her illness, which lasted for more than a year (*Warter*, i, 164). She died of consumption not long after Southey's return from Portugal in 1801.

PAGE 396. *Written immediately after reading the Speech of Robert Emmet.* Robert Emmet (1778–1803), a member of the United Irishmen, planned a rising against the English Government in Ireland, intending to seize Dublin Castle and to hold the Viceroy as a hostage. The rising took place on July 23, 1803, but was easily suppressed; not, however, before the rioters had murdered Lord Kilwarden and Colonel Brown, whom they met on their march. Emmet had fled in horror at the violence of his followers, but was arrested a month later, tried for high treason on Sept. 19, sentenced to death, and executed on the following day.

PAGE 402. *To Charles Lamb.* These lines were not included in the collected edition of 1837–8, but are printed in the present edition because of their interest as a link in the relations between Southey and Charles Lamb. They were written in reply to a contemptuous review of Lamb's *Album Verses and Other Poems*, which appeared on July 10, 1830, in the *Literary Gazette*, of which paper William Jerdan was editor. The review in question contained the following passage: 'If anything could prevent our laughing at the present collection of absurdities, it would be a lamentable conviction of the blinding and engrossing nature of vanity. We could forgive the folly of the original composition, but cannot but marvel at the egotism which has preserved, and the conceit which has published.' Southey's lines were published in *The Times* on Aug. 6, 1830. They were his first public utterance concerning Lamb since the misunderstanding between them which had arisen out of Southey's allusion to the *Essays of Elia* in the *Quarterly Review* for January, 1823—Lamb's famous open letter to him of the following October—and their speedy reconciliation, so honourable to both the friends. Lamb was much touched, and wrote to Bernard Barton on Aug. 30, 1830: 'How noble in Robert Southey to come forward for an old friend, who had treated him so unworthily!' (See E. V. Lucas, *Life of Charles Lamb*, one-vol. ed. (1907), pp. 508–14, 625 and 626.)

PAGE 403. *The Retrospect.* Corston (called Alston in the poem as originally published) is 'a small village about three miles from Bath, a little to the left of the Bristol road'. Southey passed a year there (1781–2) at a school kept by one Thomas Flower. His reminiscences of the time spent there are to be found in his *Life and Correspondence*, i, 46–58. He says of it, 'Here one year of my life was spent with little profit, and with a good deal of suffering. There could not be a worse school in all respects.'

PAGE 405, ll. 141 sqq. These lines describe a visit which Southey paid to Corston in 1793, after the house had ceased to be used as a school.

PAGE 409. *Hymn to the Penates*, l. 146. *Apega's sculptured form.* 'One of the ways and means of the tyrant Nabis. If one of his subjects refused to lend him money, he commanded him to embrace his Apega; the statue of a beautiful woman so formed as to clasp the victim to her breast, in which a pointed dagger was concealed.' (S.)

ll. 173–5. *When that false Florimel . . . Dissolved away.* See Spenser, *Faerie Queene*, Book V, Canto iii, Stanza 24.

l. 203. Edmund Seward died in June, 1795. See Notes to 'The Dead Friend'.

PAGE 410, ll. 236, 237. *The solemn festival whose happiest rites Emblem'd equality.* The Saturnalia (S.).

PAGE 420. *The Devil's Walk.* The genesis of these lines, originally known as 'The Devil's Thoughts', is told by Southey himself in stanzas 37–9. Coleridge, in a note in the 1829 edition of his poems, states that stanzas 1, 2, 3, and 15 were dictated by Southey. The remaining stanzas of the original version were presumably written in collaboration. The verses originally appeared in the *Morning*

Post of Sept. 6, 1799. The text, as then published, is printed in J. Dykes Campbell's edition of Coleridge's *Poetical Works*, pp. 621, 622. This first version included, sometimes in a modified form, stanzas 1, 2, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, and 57, of the poem as finally printed by Southey in 1838.

The squib had a great circulation. In 1812 Shelley published his imitation, 'The Devil's Walk,' and in 1813 Byron published his 'The Devil's Drive.' In 1826 Caroline Bowles urged Southey, in view of the confident assertions that Porson was the author, to publish the verses as his own, and so to set all doubts at rest. Southey was thus unfortunately moved to expand the lines until they reached their present form. Further particulars may be found in Dykes Campbell's edition of Coleridge's *Poetical Works*, loc. cit.

Page 422, ll. 65, 66. Richard Brothers, a crazy enthusiast, published *A Revealed Knowledge of the Prophecies and Times* (1794), and other similar works. He died in 1824.

l. 96. *That new Scotch performer.* Edward Irving, subsequently founder of the Catholic Apostolic Church, began to preach in London in 1822.

Page 423. Stanza 30. Richard Lalor Sheil (1791–1851), dramatist and politician; Daniel O'Connell (1775–1847); Sidney Smith (1771–1845); Joseph Hume (1777–1855), a prominent Radical M.P. from 1818 to 1855; Lord Brougham (1778–1868); Jeremy Bentham (1748–1832); Peter, seventh Baron King of Ockham (1776–1833); and James Warren Doyle (1786–1834), Roman Catholic bishop of Kildare and Leighlin, are here grouped together chiefly as having been prominent advocates of Catholic Emancipation.

Page 425. Stanza 57. 'If any one should ask who General —— meant, the Author begs leave to inform him that he did once see a red-faced person in a dream whom by the dress he took for a General; but he might have been mistaken, and most certainly he did not hear any names mentioned. In simple verity, the author never meant any one, or indeed any thing but to put a concluding stanza to his doggerel' (Coleridge's note in 1829).

INSCRIPTIONS

Page 429, xi. Juan of Padilla, a nobleman of Toledo, commanded the forces of the Comuneros, who rebelled against the government of Charles V in 1520. He was captured at Villalar on April 23, 1521, and was put to death on the following day (see *The Cambridge Modern History*, i, 372–5).

Page 432, xvii. Sir Arthur Wellesley defeated the French under de Laborde at Rolissa on Aug. 17, 1808, in his first battle in the Peninsula.

xviii. On Aug. 21, 1808, Sir Arthur Wellesley defeated the French under Junot at Vimeiro.

Page 433, xix. The battle of Coruña was fought on Jan. 16, 1809.

Page 434, xxi. Paul Burrard was a cousin of Caroline Bowles, who furnished Southey with some particulars about him. In a letter to Mrs. Hughes of Dec. 31, 1827, Southey says, writing of Caroline Bowles, 'The late Sir Harry Burrard was her uncle, and I suspect, was to have stood in another degree of relationship to her, if the battle of Corunna had not put an end to all her dreams of life. She has never expressly told me this, but that it was so I have no doubt' (*Warter*, iv, 82).

Page 435, xxii. Sir Arthur Wellesley effected the passage of the Douro in the face of Soult's army on May 12, 1809.

PAGE 436, xxiii. On July 27 and 28, 1809, Sir Arthur Wellesley defeated the French under Victor at Talavera.

xxiv. Massena attacked Wellington's position on the heights of Busaco on Sept. 27, 1810, and was repulsed with a loss of over 4,600 killed, wounded, and missing. At the loftiest summit of the mountain ridge was a convent of Carmelites, where Wellington had fixed his headquarters.

PAGE 438, xxvi. Massena evacuated Santarem on March 5, 1811.

xxvii. Wellington defeated Massena at Fuentes D'Onoro on May 5, 1811.

xxviii. The Battle of Albuhera was fought on May 16, 1811.

PAGE 440, xxx. Wellington stormed Ciudad Rodrigo on Jan. 19, 1812. Major-General Craufurd (1764–1812) had won a great reputation as leader of the light division in the Peninsula. He was shot through the body at the very beginning of the assault on Ciudad Rodrigo, and died on Jan. 24. He was buried in the breach itself.

PAGE 441, xxxii. General (afterwards Sir Rowland and finally Lord) Hill, commanding a force of British and Spanish troops, surprised the French under General Girard at Arroyo Molinos in the early morning of Oct. 28, 1811, and drove them from the village with the loss of considerably more than half their number in killed, wounded, and prisoners.

PAGE 442, xxxiii. Barré Charles Roberts (1789–1810), second son of Edward Roberts, clerk of the pells in the exchequer, graduated B.A. at Christ Church in 1808. He was a keen antiquarian, and made a fine collection of English coins, now in the possession of the trustees of the British Museum. In Feb., 1809, he contributed to the first number of the *Quarterly Review* a review of Pinkerton's *Essay on Medals*. He was seized with consumption in 1807, and died on Jan. 1, 1810. In 1814 there appeared *Letters and Miscellaneous Papers of Barré Charles Roberts, with a Memoir of his Life*, by a friend; and the volume was noticed by Southey in the *Quarterly Review* for Jan., 1815.

PAGE 443, xxxv–xxxvii. The Caledonian Canal was completed on Oct. 30, 1822.

PAGE 453. *Epistle to Allan Cunningham.* This poem was written expressly for *The Anniversary*, of which annual Allan Cunningham was editor.

ll. 32–36. Michael Angelo Taylor (1757–1834), M.P. 1800–1802, and continuously from 1806 to 1834, introduced in 1821 a Bill (subsequently passed) 'for giving greater facility to the Prosecution and Abatement of Nuisances arising from Furnaces used in the working of Steam Engines'. He is now chiefly remembered in connexion with 'The Metropolitan Paving Act, 1817', commonly known as 'Michael Angelo Taylor's Act'.

l. 138. In the summer of 1825 Southey was laid up for three weeks under the surgeon's care at Leyden. The Bilderdijks took him into their house and showed him the greatest kindness. Southey revisited them in the following summer, and continued to correspond with them afterwards. Bilderdijk's wife had translated *Roderick* into Dutch verse (see Southey's Preface to the ninth volume of the 1837–8 ed. of his Poems, *supra*, p. 19).

In 1838 Southey printed at the end of this epistle the poem by Bilderdijk which had suggested it to him. It has not been thought worth while to reprint the Dutch original in the present edition.

ll. 252 sqq. The following extract from a letter from Southey to Caroline Bowles, dated Jan. 1, 1829, gives some explanation of the portraits referred to:—

'To assist you in the collection of portraits I must tell you what are attainable and what not. The first was engraved in the *European Magazine*, and is from

a picture by Edridge. The Landlord exists only as a miniature here by poor Miss Betham. The Evangelical is in the *New Monthly Magazine*, and the French and German copies are of course not attainable in this country. Sir Smug is poor Nash's miniature. Sir Smouch belongs to the *Percy Anecdotes*. Smouch the Coiner is published for one shilling by a fellow named Lombard in the Strand. And the Minion is the mezzotinto from the villainous picture by Phillips.' (*The Correspondence of Robert Southey with Caroline Bowles*, p. 151.)

The picture by Edridge here referred to is presumably the pencil drawing made in 1804, formerly in the possession of G. C. Bedford, and now in the National Portrait Gallery.

MADOC

Begun 1794 (autumn): finally revised in the autumn of 1804: published in one vol., 4to, by Longman in 1805. A second edition appeared in 1807 and a fourth in 1815.

A MS. of 'Madoc in Wales' in Southey's writing, dated Oct. 29, 1804, is in the possession of Canon Rawnsley: the second volume of this MS., containing 'Madoc in Aztlan', is in the Keswick Museum.

PAGE 461. Part I, Section I, l. 43. *Aberfraw.* 'The palace of Gwynedd, or North Wales. Rhodri Mawr, about the year 873, fixed the seat of government here.' . . . (S.)

PAGE 467. Section III, l. 19. *Dinevawr.* 'Dinas Vawr, the Great Palace, the residence of the Princes of Deheubarth, or South Wales. This also was erected by Rhodri Mawr.' (S.)

l. 24. 'I have taken some liberties here with the history. Hoel kept possession of the throne nearly two years; he then went to Ireland to claim the property of his mother, Pyvog, the daughter of an Irish chieftain; in the meantime David seized the government. Hoel raised all the force he could to recover the crown, but after a severe conflict was wounded and defeated. He returned to Ireland with the remains of his army, which probably consisted chiefly of Irishmen, and there died of his wounds.—(*Cambrian Biography*).' (S.)

PAGE 475. Section IV, l. 184. *Gwenhidwy.* A mermaid. (S.)

PAGE 481. Section VI, l. 131. 'Islets of this kind, with dwelling huts upon them, were common upon the Lake of Mexico.'—Clavigero. (S.)

PAGE 496. Section XI, l. 13–17. 'By the principles of the Order a bard was never to bear arms, nor in any other manner to become a party in any dispute, either political or religious. . . .—Owen's Llywarc Hen.' (S.)

PAGE 537. Part II, Section VI, l. 192. 'Snake-worship was common in America.'—Bernal Dias, p. 3. 7. 125. . . .

'It can scarcely be necessary to say that I have attributed to the Hoamen such manners and superstitions as, really existing among the savage tribes of America, were best suited to the plan of the poem.' (S.)

PAGE 545. Section IX, l. 16. *Elmur and Aronan.* Bards who had borne arms. Aronan was one of three known as 'the three Bards of the Ruddy Spear.' (S.)

PAGE 547, ll. 99–106. 'Tezcalipoca was believed to arrive first, because he was the youngest of the Gods, and never waxed old. . . .' (S.)

l. 107. *Mexitli, woman-born.* 'The history of Mexitli's birth is related in the poem, Part II, Section XXI.' (S.)

l. 111. *Quetzalcoal.* 'God of the Winds.' (S.)

PAGE 548, l. 161. 'The Gods of the conquered nations were kept fastened and caged in the Mexican temples.' (S.)

PAGE 550. Section X, l. 66. *Coatlantona.* '"The mother of Mexitli, who, being a mortal woman, was made immortal for her son's sake, and appointed Goddess of all herbs, flowers, and trees."—Clavigero.' (S.)

PAGE 556. Section XII, l. 85. *Tlalocan.* 'The Paradise of Tlaloc.' (S.)

PAGE 567. Section XV, l. 94. '"An old priest of the Tlatelucas, when they were at war with the Mexicans, advised them to drink the holy beverage before they went to battle; this was made by washing the Stone of Sacrifice; the king drank first, and then all his chiefs and soldiers in order; it made them eager and impatient for the fight."—*Torquemada*, l. ii, c. 58.' (S.)

PAGE 602. Section XXVII, ll. 35–48. 'My excuse for this insignificant agency, as I fear it will be thought, must be that the fact itself is historically true; by means of this omen the Aztecas were induced to quit their country, after a series of calamities. The leader who had address enough to influence them was Huitziton, a name which I have altered to Yuhidthiton for the sake of euphony; the note of the bird is expressed in Spanish and Italian thus, *tihui*; the cry of the peewhit cannot be better expressed.' (S.)

BALLADS AND METRICAL TALES

PAGE 636. *St. Gualberto.* George Burnett (1776 ?–1811) was a friend of Southey at Balliol, and one of those who joined in the scheme of 'pantisocracy'. His erratic disposition made his life 'a series of unsuccessful attempts in many professions'. He published in 1807 a *View of the Present State of Poland*, and also edited *Specimens of English Prose Writers* (1807) and a selection from Milton's Prose Works (1809). For the last two years of his life his friends and relations saw and heard nothing of him, and he died in the Marylebone Infirmary in Feb., 1811.

PAGE 644. *Roprecht the Robber.* There is a MS. of this ballad (undated) in the British Museum, and another in the possession of Canon Rawnsley.

A TALE OF PARAGUAY

This poem was begun in 1814, laid aside for long intervals, and only finished on Feb. 24, 1825. It was published by Longman in one volume, 12mo, in 1825.

PAGE 657. Dedication, ll. 6–14. Southey first made the acquaintance of John May at Lisbon in 1795–6, and thus began a lifelong friendship.

l. 18. Southey's eldest child, Margaret, died in August 1803, being then not quite a year old.

PAGE 672. Canto II, l. 249. *And Father was his name.* 'Tupa. It is the Tupi and Guarani name for Father, for Thunder, and for the Supreme Being.' (S.)

PAGE 681. Canto III, ll. 168–71. In 1822 Sara Coleridge, who, with her mother, was still living at Greta Hall, had published (doubtless at Southey's suggestion) a translation in three volumes of Dobrizhoffer's *Account of the Abipones.*

THE POET'S PILGRIMAGE TO WATERLOO

This poem was published by Longman in one volume, 12mo, in 1816. Southey had toured in Holland and Belgium in Sept.–Oct., 1815, with Mrs. Southey, their eldest daughter Edith, Edward Nash, the artist, and one or two other friends. The Southeys reached Greta Hall on their return on Dec. 6, 1815; and a melancholy interest attaches to the Proem to 'The Poet's Pilgrimage', in which that joyous homecoming is so feelingly described. Herbert, Southey's only boy, the very light of his eyes, was taken ill in the following March, and died on April 17, 1816. He was in the tenth year of his age. Southey never recovered from this blow. 'The head and flower of his earthly happiness' had been, as he said, 'cut off.' And a fresh bitterness must, if possible, have been added to his sorrow by the fact that he was obliged at the time to occupy himself in correcting the proofs of this poem, which had been written in such joy and thankfulness of heart.

Cp. the 'Fragmentary Thoughts occasioned by his Son's Death', and the 'Additional Fragment,' pp. 740–2.

Page 699. Proem, l. 51. *Her twin-like comrade.* Sara Coleridge, who was born in 1802, and had been brought up at Greta Hall.

Page 700, l. 109. *The aged friend serene.* Mrs. Wilson. She had been housekeeper to Mr. Jackson, the former owner of Greta Hall, and continued to live there until her death in 1820.

l. 112. *The aunts.* Mrs. Coleridge and Mrs. Lovell.

Page 701. Part I, i, l. 13. Charles Martel defeated the Saracens at Tours on Oct. 10, 732.

Page 702, l. 38. *Ourique's consecrated field.* Alfonso, count or duke of Portugal, is said to have completely defeated the Moors at Ourique on July 25, 1139, and then to have been hailed the first king.

l. 55. *that old siege.* Ostend was besieged by the Spaniards from July, 1601, to Sept., 1604, when it honourably capitulated.

Page 704, l. 181. *That sisterhood.* The Beguines. (S.)

Page 705, l. 211. *And one had dwelt with Malabars and Moors.* Edward Nash, the artist. Southey made his acquaintance in Belgium in 1815, and they were on terms of close intimacy until Nash's death in Jan., 1821. Nash drew the Portrait of the Author and the Sketch of the Bust published in the one-volume edition of *The Doctor, &c.*, the picture of Bertha, Kate, and Isabel Southey prefixed to vol. v of Southey's *Life and Correspondence*, and seven of the illustrations in the first edition of *The Poet's Pilgrimage to Waterloo.*

l. 223. *A third who from the Land of Lakes with me Went out. . . .* Henry Koster, author of *Travels in Brazil.* Southey had become acquainted with him at Lisbon in 1800.

Page 706, l. 246. In 1583 the English garrison of Alost delivered up the town to the Spaniards in consideration of receiving from them their pay, which had been withheld by the States. It is fair to add that the Dutch had not only refused to give them their pay, but had also threatened 'to force them out, or else to famish them' (Grimestone, *Hist. of the Netherlands*, 833, quoted by Southey in his note ad loc.).

l. 247. *Afflighem, by ruin rent.* 'This magnificent Abbey was destroyed during the Revolution, . . . an act of popular madness which the people in its

vicinity now spoke of with unavailing regret. The library was at one time the richest in Brabant.' (S.)

PAGE 707, ll. 70–2. 'One of our coachmen, who had been employed (like all his fraternity) in removing the wounded, asked us what was the meaning of the English word *O Lord!* for thus, he said, the wounded were continually crying out.' (S.)

PAGE 708, ll. 19–24. Charles II of Spain married as his first wife Marie Louise, niece of Louis XIV. His death in 1700 without issue led to the War of the Spanish Succession.

PAGE 709, ll. 65–6. *When Marlborough here, victorious in his might, Surprised the French.* . . . 'A detachment of the French was entrenched at Waterloo Chapel, August 1705, when the Duke of Marlborough advanced to attack the French army at Over Ysche, and this detachment was destroyed with great slaughter (*Echard's Gazetteer*). . . . Marlborough was prevented by the Deputies of the States from pursuing his advantage, and attacking the enemy, at a time when he made sure of victory.—*Hist. de l'Empereur Charles VI*, t. ii, p. 90.' (S.)

PAGE 710, l. 115. *The young Nassau.* The Prince of Orange.

PAGE 714, l. 290. *Howard's corse.* See *Childe Harold*, Canto iii, Stanzas 29 and 30. The Hon. Frederick Howard (1785–1815), third son of the fifth Earl of Carlisle, was killed at Waterloo late in the evening in a final charge of the left square of the French Guard.

PAGE 719, l. 249. *The Prussian's heavy hand.* 'Wherever we went we heard one cry of complaint against the Prussians, except at Ligny, where the people had witnessed only their courage and their sufferings. This is the effect of making the military spirit predominate in a nation. The conduct of our men was universally extolled; but it required years of exertion and of severity before Lord Wellington brought the British army to its present state of discipline. . . .

'What I have said of the Prussians relates solely to their conduct in an allied country; and I must also say that the Prussian officers with whom I had the good fortune to associate, were men who in every respect did honour to their profession and to their country. But that the general conduct of their troops in Belgium had excited a strong feeling of disgust and indignation we had abundant and indisputable testimony. In France they had old wrongs to revenge; and forgiveness of injuries is not among the virtues which are taught in camps.' (S.)

PAGE 723, l. 169. *Navarre's heroic chief.* Mina, a celebrated guerrilla chief, who harassed the French troops in Navarre during the Peninsular War.

PAGE 726, l. 70. *Fleurus' later name.* The French under Jourdan defeated the Austrians at Fleurus on June 25, 1794.

MISCELLANEOUS POETICAL REMAINS

PAGE 740. *Fragmentary Thoughts, occasioned by his Son's Death.* These fragments and the two following poems were published by Herbert Hill, Southey's cousin and son-in-law, in 1845, together with other verses, in a volume under the title of *Oliver Newman: A New-England Tale: With other Poetical Remains.* In the preface to that volume Herbert Hill thus speaks of the occasion and the purpose of these memorials of the greatest sorrow of Southey's life: 'His son Herbert—of whom he wrote thus in the *Colloquies*, "I called to mind my hopeful

H. too, so often the sweet companion of my morning walks to this very spot, in whom I had fondly thought my better part should have survived me,

> With whom it seem'd my very life
> Went half away"—

died 17th April, 1816, being about ten years old, a boy of remarkable genius and sweetness of disposition. These Fragments bear a date at their commencement, 3rd May, 1816, but do not seem all written at the same time. The Author at one time contemplated founding upon them a considerable work, of a meditative and deeply serious cast. But, although he, like Schiller, after the vanishing of his ideals, always found "Employment, the never-tiring", one of his truest friends,—yet this particular form of employment, which seemed at first attractive to him, had not, when tried, the soothing effect upon his feelings which was needful; and in March, 1817, he writes that he "had not recovered heart enough to proceed with it".'

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